THE LAUREATE'S COUNTRY

SKETCHES OF PLACES CONNECTED WITH THE LIFE OF

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

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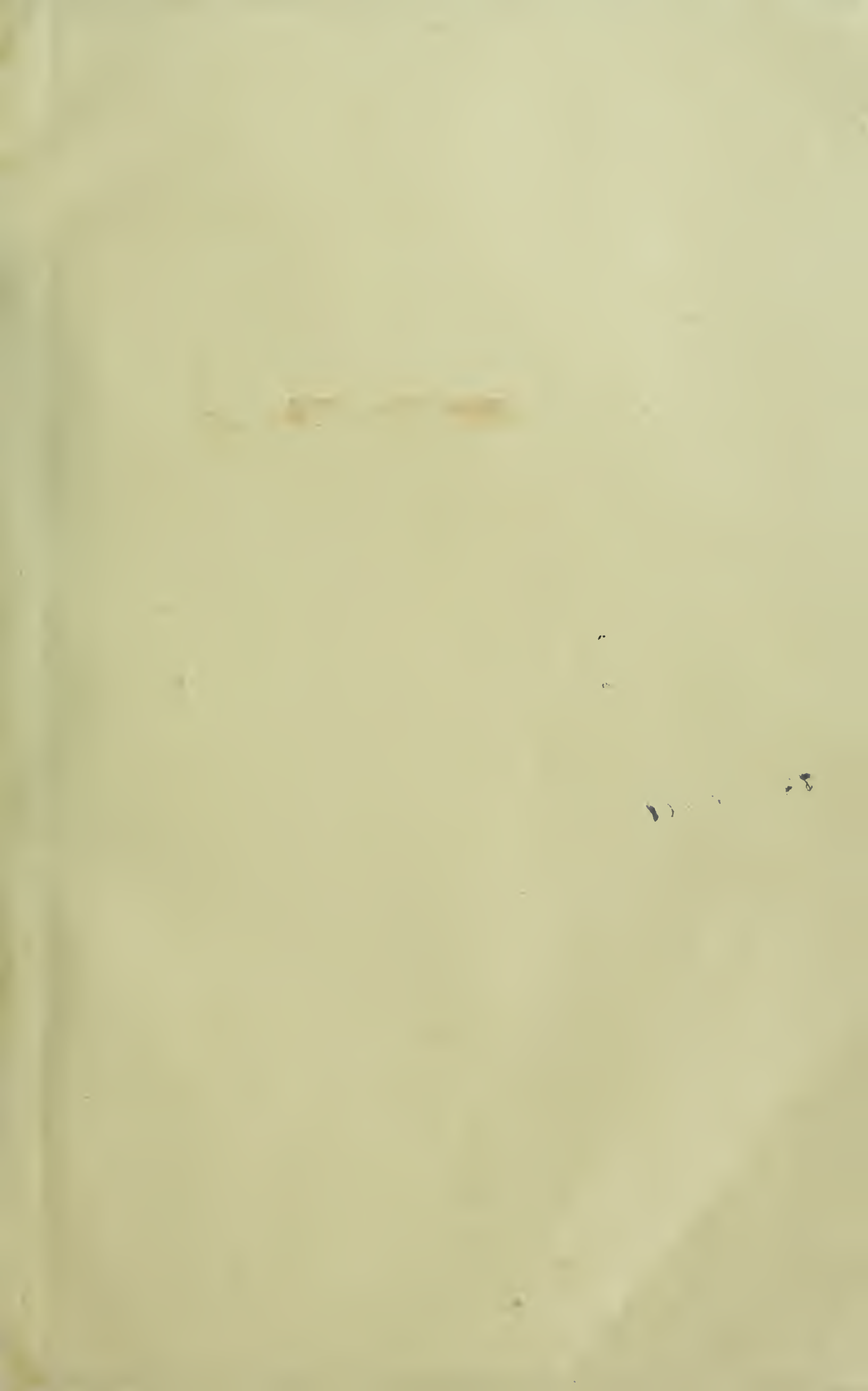


Lord Tennyson

THE LAUREATE'S COUNTRY

A Description
of Places connected with the Life of

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

BY

ALFRED J. CHURCH, M.A.

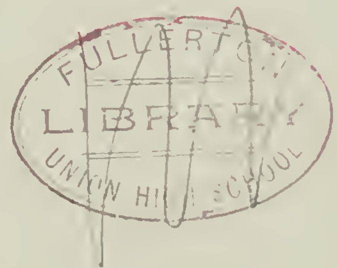
Lately Professor of Latin in University College, London

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DRAWINGS

BY

EDWARD HULL

> Wer den Dichter will verstehen
> Muss in Dichters Lande gehen
>
> GOETHE



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TO

AUDREY GEORGIANA FLORENCE

WIFE OF THE HONOURABLE HALLAM TENNYSON

THIS BOOK

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THE LAUREATE'S COUNTRY

I

PREFATORY WORDS

"FIFTY years hence people will make pilgrimages to this place." These words were spoken by one young man to another some sixty years ago. The place was what was then the Rectory-house of Somersby parish in Lincolnshire; the speaker was Arthur Hallam; the person to whom he spoke was Alfred Tennyson. This prediction showed a peculiarly keen literary insight. That Alfred Tennyson was a poet any critic not wholly obtuse and incompetent could have seen even in those early days; but that he should be one of the famous few whose birthplaces are objects of pilgrimage, it was scarcely given to any one but his friend to see. Just now, however, I am not concerned with the truth of the prophecy, or the insight of the prophet; I would rather see in it an apology for all who are concerned in the production of this book, publisher, draughtsman and writer. Sixty years ago the profession of the "interviewer" had not been invented; the passion of the public for seeing famous men, and some who are famous with a difference, had not come into being, at least had not a whole literature designed to satisfy it. But there has always been a desire, which, duly controlled, is a lawful desire, to know something of the surroundings among which great writers have grown up. This desire is especially strong where the great writer is a poet; and can then best justify its existence. One can think of famous books that are wholly detached from the circum-

B

stances amidst which they are written. Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, were epoch-making works; but it would have been little better than idle curiosity in the student of science or history to make a pilgrimage to Grantham or Putney. The case is often, though not indeed always, different with great poems. Here the surroundings of the writer are part of the literary history of his work. That work is the expression of the man, and it is helpful, if it is not essential, to the full appreciation of it, to see and know something of the scenes amidst which the man's powers grew to their maturity, or when so matured, were exercised. The degree in which this knowledge of surroundings helps the student varies, of course, with different writers. Wordsworth represents one class. We lose much of his spirit if we have never seen, if not with our own eyes, at least with the eyes of another, Esthwaite Lake, and Hawkshead, and Grasmere, and Grisdale Tarn, and Rydal Water, and Helvellyn. Crabbe represents another. We can adequately appreciate him without knowing anything of where he was born or where he lived; yet him too we seem to know the better, when we see the outward semblances of Aldborough, and Woodbridge, and Beccles. Lord Tennyson belongs indeed, so far as this matter is concerned, to the class of Crabbe, rather than to the class of Wordsworth. The part of his poetry that is interpreted to us, even in degree, by a knowledge of the surroundings of his life is comparatively small; yet it is enough to give to such knowledge no little interest and value.

"Literary history," says Mr. Edmund Gosse, in his article on the "Early Career of Robert Browning,"[1] "is a very different thing from personal history, and there are certain facts about the development of a poet's intellect, and the direction which it took, . . . about which curiosity is perfectly legitimate." This is the principle by which I shall endeavour to guide myself. I shall at least hope not to offend, if ever I pass the line, not always to be easily distinguished, that separates the literary from the personal.

[1] Published originally in the *Century Magazine*, December, 1881; re-published, with additions, this year (1890), by Mr. T. Fisher Unwin. (The title-page bears his name; but the work is an American publication.)

II

LINCOLNSHIRE

FULLER, quoted in the excellent *Handbook for Lincolnshire*,[1] lately published, says of Lincolnshire : " It is observable that as it equalled other shires in all ages, so it went before itself in one generation, viz., in the reign of Queen Elizabeth." The editor of the handbook excepts, indeed, from its superiority among English counties Devonshire, which also had its golden age in Elizabethan days, and Middlesex, which, as he justly remarks, does not afford a fair comparison. Out of the list of Lincolnshire worthies that he gives may be mentioned, Stephen Langton, William of Waynfleet, Archbishop Whitgift, John Wesley, Lord Burleigh, Dr. Busby, most famous of schoolmasters, Sir Isaac Newton, and Sir John Franklin. A not less imposing list of adopted sons might be made out, were it relevant to my purpose. Two causes among many that might be given for this pre-eminence may be mentioned—the great wealth of the county in the pre-manufacturing days of England, and the strong admixture of the vigorous Danish race with its population. Nowhere, if the evidence of local names is to be trusted, was the Scandinavian element stronger.[2] This is said to be a potent factor in the generation of mental power.

The popular idea of Lincolnshire is fairly well represented by the way

[1] *Handbook for Lincolnshire.* London : John Murray, 1890. I must take exception, indeed, to the writer's criticism of Lord Tennyson's Lincolnshire dialect poems. These are written in the mid-Lincolnshire dialect, one that differs considerably from that spoken in the northern and southern parts of the county.

[2] "One hundred and ninety-five places in the county, a third of the whole, end in the characteristic Danish termination *by*, and seventy-six more in *thorpe*. (*Handbook for Lincolnshire*).

in which in Sir Walter Scott's novel of *Woodstock* the roystering cavalier introduces himself—"Roger Wildrake of Squattleseamere, in the moist county of Lincoln." As a matter of fact it is not a *moist* county at all, thanks to the energy and skill which have been liberally expended upon it during the last two centuries. The *Fen* and the *Marsh*[1] are as dry as most of England, so effective is the system of drainage which is at work throughout

View from a Hill near Somersby

it, and dryer than some places on a more elevated level where nature has been left to itself. But there is a considerable part of the county which never could have been described as "moist" at all. Standing second in size of the English shires (it reckons 2,611 square miles as against the 6,067 of Yorkshire) it contains a large proportion of hilly country. The region with which we are at present concerned is a well-defined district known as the Wolds. This region occupies the central part of the Lindsey division

[1] The broad distinction between these two kinds of land is this: "Fen" is land reclaimed from fresh water, and "marsh" land reclaimed from the sea or left by it (as at Pevensey in East Sussex and the region between Sandwich and the coast).

Tetford under the Lincolnshire Wold

TETFORD AND THE LINCOLNSHIRE WOLDS

of the county, and runs in a direction which may be roughly described as north-north-west from Spilsby to Barton, which is close to the southern shore of the Humber. Its extreme length is something less than fifty miles, its average breadth between seven and eight. The Wolds are chalk hills, and indeed may be said to be part of a great line which extends, though not continuously, from Scarborough to Salisbury Plain. For the most part, however, it is the subsoil only that is chalk. Above this lie many varieties of soil. Sometimes the rock crops up; sometimes there is a sandy or flinty loam, scarcely fit for anything but rabbit-warrens; elsewhere we find a mixture of clay, making, as at Barton-field, a mixture of remarkable richness.

III

SOMERSBY

Not far from the South-eastern extremity of this Wold country is the little village of Somersby. The nearest town to it is Horncastle, which is six miles to the south-west. Alford is about nine miles to the east, and Spilsby seven to the south-south-east. The gazetteer states that it contains 600 acres and a population of forty-three (a number which indicates a considerable decrease from the time of which I am about to speak).[1] Ecclesiastically it is a rectory (united with Bag Enderby, of which more will be said hereafter) in the archdeaconry of Stow and diocese of Lincoln. To these benefices the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson was presented in 1808. He had graduated at St. John's College seven years before,[2] and had married (August 6, 1805) Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. Stephen Fytche, Vicar of Louth, Lincolnshire. (She died in 1865 in her eighty-fifth year.)

It may be convenient to give at this place some particulars of Mr. Tennyson's descent. In this descent two lines are blended, the middle class line of the Tennysons, and the noble and even royal line of the D'Eyncourts.

To speak first of the Tennysons. The earliest notice of them that has at present been found locates them at Holdernesse in Yorkshire, in the first half of the sixteenth century. The will of John Tennyson, of Ryall, in Holdernesse, in the county of York, directs that his body is to be buried in the Kirkgarth of All Hallows, in Skekelyng, and bequeaths to Margaret

[1] In 1821 there were 62 inhabitants.

[2] He proceeded to the further degrees of M.A in 1805, and of LL.D. in 1813.

his wife an oxyard of land and half a close called Stockett Close during widowhood. Bequests are made to various sons and daughters, one William among them. This William appears to have been Mayor of Holdernesse, for he is found leaving by will his "best mace" to his son John. Another of the sons of this William is described as Lancelot Tennyson of Preston, an interesting collocation of names, because it was to a Tennyson of Preston that the descendant of the D'Eyncourts was married.

The D'Eyncourt descent is thus exhibited by Mr. Joseph Foster, by common consent, a most trustworthy genealogist[1] : John of Gaunt (fourth son of Edward III.), married Katharine Swynford (widow of Sir Otes Swinford, Knt.). The marriage was irregular, but the children of it were legitimated by Act of Parliament in the reign of Henry V., only without the rights of succession to the Crown. Following the line of descent we come to Edmund, Duke of Somerset, killed at the first battle of St. Alban's. From him the pedigree displays itself as follows—

(1) His daughter Eleanor married Thomas Cary, of Chilton Folliott, in the county of Wilts.

(2) Sir John Cary, of Thremball Priory, Essex, son of Thomas and Eleanor.

(3) Sir Edward Cary, of Aldenham, Herts, son of Sir John Cary.

(4) Anne, sixth daughter of Sir Edward Cary, married Sir Francis Leke, of Sutton, in the county of York, created Baron Deincourt in 1624.

(5) Anne, eldest daughter of Sir Francis Leke, and Anne his wife, married Henry Hildyard, of Winestead, in the county of York, who died January, 1674.

(6) Henry Hildyard, son of Henry Hildyard.

(7) Christopher, son of Henry Hildyard (II.), married Jane, daughter of George Pitt (descended from Lionel, Duke of Clarence).

(8) Dorothy, daughter of Christopher Hildyard, married George Clayton, Baltic merchant, of Great Grimsby.

[1] *The Royal Lineage of Our Noble and Gentle Families.* By Joseph Foster. (Hatchards, 1887.)

27

(9) Elizabeth, daughter of George Clayton and Dorothy his wife, married Michael Tennyson of Preston, who died 1796.

(10) George Tennyson, M.P., of Bayons Manor, in the county of Lincoln, married Mary, daughter of John Turner. Of this George Tennyson, George Clayton Tennyson, born at Market Rasen, December 10, 1778, was the elder son.

The barony of Deincourt was the revival of an older peerage; with this also the Tennysons are connected.

The line of descent is as follows—

(1) John, 12th Baron D'Eyncourt of Blankney (*circa* 1415).

(2) Alice, his daughter, Baroness D'Eyncourt, married William, Lord Lovel.

(3) William, his son, married Alianore, Baroness Morley.

(4) Alice Lovel, daughter of William and Alianore, married William (Lord Morley *jure uxoris*).

(5) Henry, son of Alice and William.

(6) Henry (II.), son of Henry.

(7) Edward, son of Henry (II.).

(8) William, son of Edward (Lord Monteagle, in right of his mother), the discoverer of the Gunpowder Plot.

(9) Catherine, his daughter, married John, Earl Rivers.

(10) Jane, their daughter, married George Pitt, and was the mother of Jane Pitt, who married, as may be seen by reference to the first genealogy, Christopher Hildyard.

An interesting fact relating to the poet's descent may here be mentioned. His mother's mother (Mrs. Fytche) was a granddaughter of a certain Mons. Fauvelle, a French Huguenot, who was related to Madame de Maintenon.

The most striking feature in the landscape of the parish of Somersby is a wooded ravine known as the "Glen," and also bearing the local name of Holywell. Nothing could less resemble the notion commonly entertained of Lincolnshire scenery than this spot. It is not unlike Fairlight,[1] on a small

[1] Fairlight is two or three miles to the east of Hastings.

Somersby.

SOMERSBY

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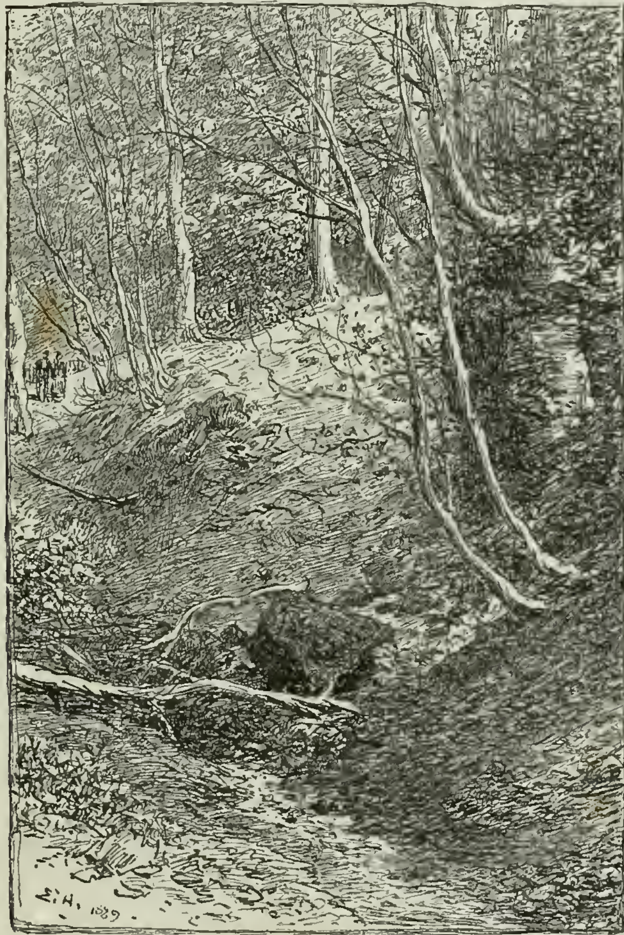
scale. But happily it has not yet been trimmed and civilized to make it a promenade for visitors. There is no path through it, and any one who would penetrate from end to end will find rough walking. The little streams that run through it have made quagmires here and there, and the underwood is



The Glen at Somersby

thick. Here and there a tall pine has been suffered to lie where it fell. At the upper end of this glen are some sandstone rocks. Here we come across the first local association with the poet. On one of these rocks the young Alfred Tennyson—he was then some three months short of completing his fifteenth year—wrote BYRON IS DEAD. We may suppose the time to have

been some day early in May, for Byron died on April 19th, 1824, and the news must have taken at least a fortnight in reaching this remote Lincolnshire village. No one can wonder at the profound impression made by the event on the lad's mind. How profound it was may be gathered from his own description of his feeling as given to a friend[1] long afterwards: "I thought the whole world was at an end; I thought that everything was over

The Brook at Somersby

and finished for every one, that nothing else mattered." And indeed Byron was more, or seemed more, to the youth of that time than any poet has ever been since to his contemporaries. But though the very earliest of Tennyson's poems betray some signs of this influence, such signs soon cease to appear. All the work that is truly characteristic of him, all that he has deliberately adopted as his own, has absolutely nothing of Byron's style or tone of thought. The next thing to be mentioned is directly associated with

[1] Miss Thackeray (*Harper's Magazine*, Christmas Number 1887).

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Somersby Brook

SOMERSBY BROOK

Tennyson's verse. At the lower end of the glen flows a brook, a picturesque little stream, showing many various beauties, as it makes its way, now through woodland, now by meadow or ploughed land. But the reader must not identify it, as he will naturally be disposed to do, with the brook that has given a name to one of the poems published in the same volume with "Enoch Arden" and "Aylmer's Field." Of course there are points of resemblance between the brook of which the short-lived Edmund Aylmer sang ere he slept—

> "Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
> But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
> Of Brunelleschi."

There are "hazel covers" and "sweet forget-me-nots," and "many a silvery waterbreak above the golden gravel." The Somersby rivulet may say, as the "babbling brook" said to its questioner—

> "I chatter over stony ways,
> In little sharps and trebles,
> I bubble into eddying bays,
> I babble on the pebbles.
>
> With many a curve my banks I fret
> By many a field and fallow,
> And many a fairy foreland set
> With willow-weed and mallow."

But there are some things in its supposed prototype which manifestly it could not claim. It does not hurry down, for instance, by "thirty hills," for it soon makes its way into the low country, nor is there "a brimming river" for it to join. Finally, it cannot make at least one-half of the boast that it holds

> "Here and there a lusty trout,
> And here and there a grayling."

There may be, or anyhow have been, trout in the brook; but scarcely a grayling. The grayling is not a Lincolnshire fish, except so far as Trent

numbers him among his thirty kinds.[1] Even Trent, I imagine, holds the grayling only in his upper waters. His stream, where he borders or divides Lincolnshire, is not congenial to the habits of the fish. This may seem hypercritical; perhaps it would be were it said of some poets; but it is one of the characteristics of Tennyson to be exact in all his treatment of nature. If it had been in his mind to describe this particular brook, we may be sure that he would not have made it flow by one hill too many, or placed a

A Hump-backed Willow by the Brook

foreign fish in its waters. It is in the *Ode to Memory*, an early poem, that we find the actual Somersby stream. This is

"The brook that loves
To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,
Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
In every elbow and turn,
The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland."

[1] A sufficiently absurd conjecture derives the name of *Trent* from the thirty (*trente*) species of fish which, it is said, are found in the waters of the river.

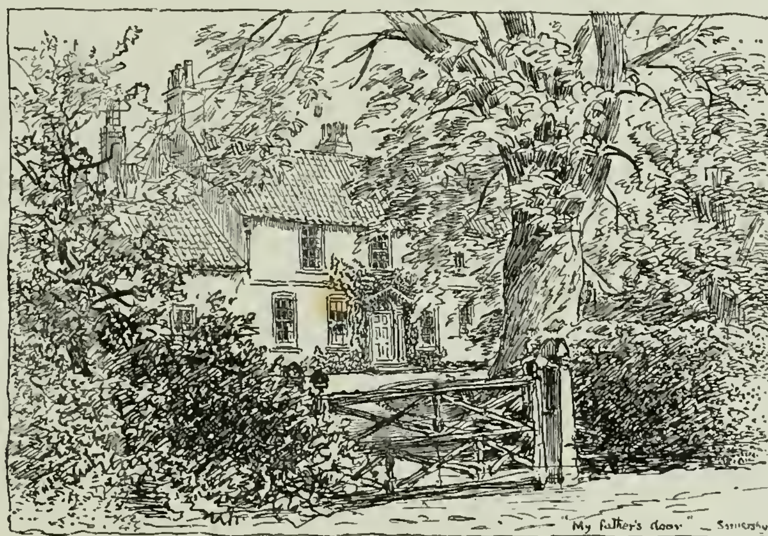
Somersby Rectory

SOMERSBY RECTORY

This, it must not be forgotten, is one of the common memories to which the poet appeals in his address to his brother (Charles, doubtless),

> "For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
> Thro' all his eddying coves."

Every syllable of this is true; not less true is it that the poet bids the Memory which he invokes come, as from other objects familiar to the eyes of his childhood, "from the woods that belt the gray hill-side," and the trees in his father's garden, so "*chiefly* from the brook." For a child there is



Gate of Somersby Rectory

nothing like the fascination of a stream. Any one who will carefully search into his early associations will find the memories of running water, if only he has had the opportunity of acquiring them, the most vivid of all his recollections.

But we have yet to see what is of course the most interesting spot in Somersby, the poet's actual birth-place. This is the house now known as the "Old Rectory." Here Mr. Tennyson took up his residence on being presented in 1808 to the united benefices of Somersby and Bag Enderby, and here, on August 5th, 1809, the poet was born. (The tradition which points

out one particular room—a very small one, by the way—as that in which he actually saw the light is, I have been given to understand, incorrect.) The house stands on the right-hand side of the road (I presume that the traveller will approach it from Horncastle). One misses at once a feature that a study of the *Ode to Memory* may have led us to expect,

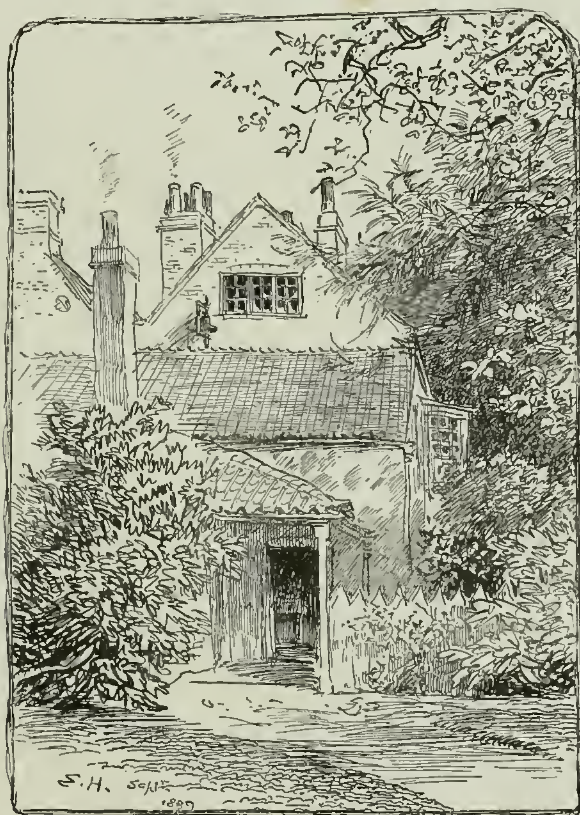
> "The poplars four
> That stand beside my father's door."

Not a vestige of these trees is left. They are always short-lived, and it will be remembered that three-fourths of a century have passed since the poet first saw them.[1] The house, when Mr. Tennyson took possession of it, must have been somewhat smaller than the average English parsonage. He added to it, in the course of his occupation, a room of semi-ecclesiastical appearance, which the visitor—visitors to Somersby have come to have the local name of "Tennysons"—will see on the left of the house. Presumably he was his own architect, and he built before even professional architects knew much about the "Gothic" style which he endeavoured to imitate. The available space, too, was limited. The room is spacious and well-proportioned, and must have been a convenient addition to the accommodation of the house. He also built a large kitchen.

Of one other room in the house some mention should be made. One of our sketches shows a window in the gable end. This marks the situation of the room which the young Tennyson had for his study or "den," and which may be regarded as the veritable birth-place of some of the *Juvenilia*, the earliest of the great artist's workshops, and serving the same purposes that the well-known rooms of Farringford and Aldworth have done in later years. There is an anecdote connected with this room which must not be omitted. It illustrates one side of the poet's character which careful

[1] It is said that the first poplars planted in England—I speak of the lofty tree known as the Lombardy poplar—were those which many readers will recollect as one of the features in the landscape seen from the bridge of Henley-upon-Thames. Marshal Conway (1720—1795) planted them, presumably about 1780. They were in their full glory about forty years ago. Now only one or two stumps remain.

students of his work will not have failed to discover. Sitting one night in this room he heard an owl cry. He answered with the bird's peculiar "snore"; the bird flew into the room. There it was kept, and there, in process of time, it became so tame that it would sit by its master and affectionately rub its beak against his face. It is impossible not to think, in connection with this anecdote, of the two songs in *Juvenilia*, which have the owl for their



Gable of Somersby Rectory

theme. The poet has kept a place for them among his "Works" while he has excluded more than one piece which most of his readers would probably have preferred to put there. May we guess that the choice has something to do with an affectionate remembrance of that favourite of sixty years ago? In the second stanza of the second song he, curiously enough, disclaims, while he seems to practise, the imitative power.

> "I would mock thy chaunt anew;
> But I cannot mimick it;
> Not a whit of thy tuwhoo
> Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
> Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
> With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
> Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-o-o."

The poet's keen observation of nature is so obvious throughout his work that it has become one of the commonplaces of criticism to enlarge upon it. Every one knows the ashbuds black "in the front of March," and how the chestnut "divides three-fold to show the fruit within," and "the rosy plumelets tuft the larch," how dawn "raises the black republic on the elms," and how

> "The hedgehog underneath the plaintain bores,
> The rabbit fondles his own harmless face."

and when there is keen observation there is pretty sure to be strong affection. It is not difficult to understand how the poet whose heart goes out so strongly to bird and beast could tame that not very tameable creature the owl. It may not, I hope, be "impertinent," in either sense of the word, to mention that the poet has the gift of imitating the cries of animals with remarkable accuracy.

Though the "poplars four" are gone, and the "towering sycamore" has followed them, yet the "seven elms," mentioned along with them in the passage quoted from the *Ode to Memory*, still remain. They are in the garden behind the house, on the left-hand side as one looks down it from the windows, the same

> "Witch elms that counterchange the floor
> Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright."

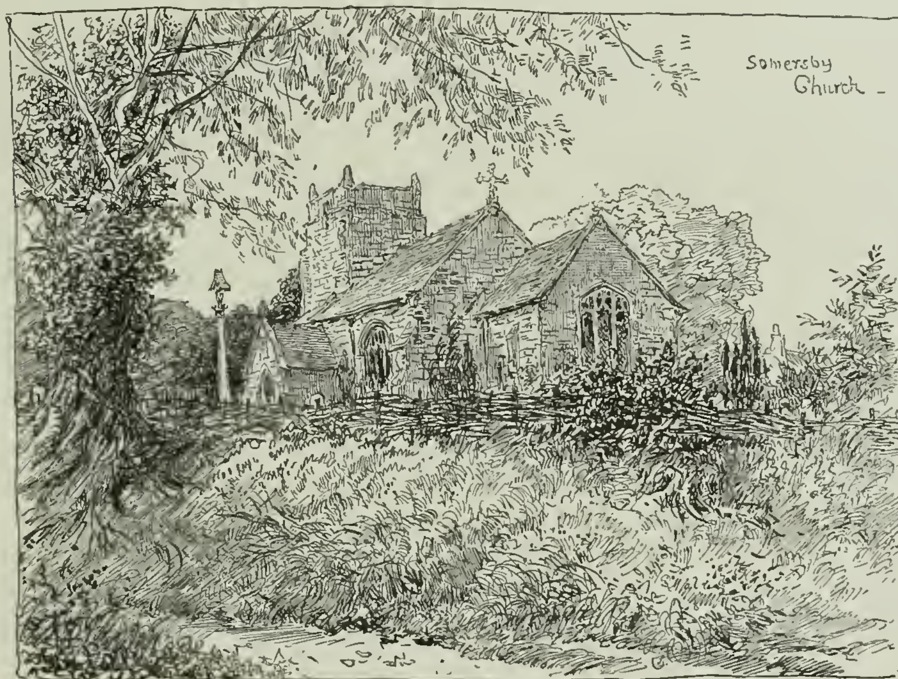
The rest of the garden, though, it may be, a little idealized, one may see in the

> "Garden bower'd close
> With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,
> Long alleys falling down to twilight grots,
> Or opening upon level plots
> Of crownèd lilies, standing near
> Purple-spikéd lavender."

It has been greatly altered by successive occupants. The shape of the lawn has been changed ; in fact little remains but the trees.

It may be explained that the house is no longer the rectory of the parish. By an arrangement made through the Ecclesiastical Commissioners it has become the property of the Lord of the Manor, who has given in exchange a house situated in the parish of Bag Enderby.

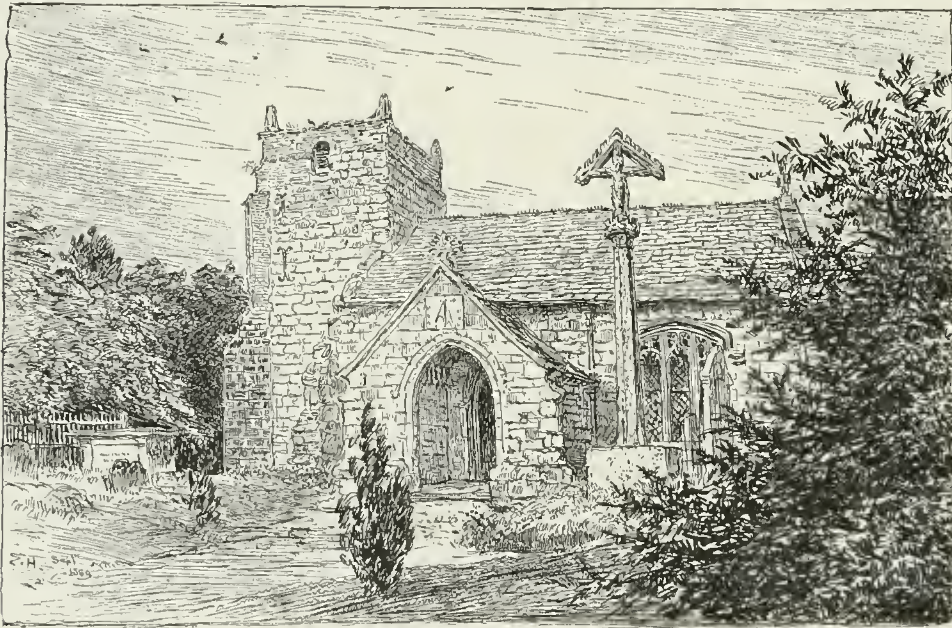
From the rectory we naturally pass to the church. This is a small building in the Early Perpendicular style. It consists of a very squat



Somersby Church

tower, a nave with a north aisle, and a chancel. The material is of sandstone, which has been largely repaired with brick. The interior is distinctly uninteresting. It has been restored in the "correct and elegant" style which commended itself to church architects some forty years ago. Its neat pavement of encaustic tiles, though these are not very harmoniously coloured, and open seats of indifferent design, must have been, in one way, an improvement on the uneven flags and high pews which they superseded ; but they have a very dull and monotonous appearance : and in the eyes of the visitor they have the disadvantage of being

obviously more recent than the period which specially interests him There is one wall monument. It is to the memory of Mrs. Katharine Burton and her husband Richard Burton, citizen of London. It belongs to the middle of the last century. The Burtons are still lords of the manors of Somersby and Bag Enderby. The exterior of the church and churchyard present some more noteworthy objects. Over the south porch



The Cross in Somersby Churchyard

there is a sundial with the inscription, in seventeenth-century letters, I should imagine, of *Time Passeth,* and on the north side may be seen a holy-water stoup, while within a short distance rises a very remarkable Roman preaching cross. It consists of a well-proportioned octagonal shaft, placed on a plain cubical stone pedestal, and surmounted by a crucifix. There are, I believe, very few of the kind in England. Those that escaped the destroyer in the days of the Edwardian and Elizabethan Reformations fell victims to the fiercer iconoclasm which, in the times of the Commonwealth, swept out of England all "idolatrous" symbols. Happy Somersby seems to have been in a measure untouched by either wave of change; and it is not difficult, so quiet is the place and so remote, to understand this exemption.

A little to the west of the tower is the tomb of the poet's father. It is a flat stone inclosed with high railings, and bears the following inscription :—

TO THE MEMORY OF
THE REVEREND
GEORGE CLAYTON TENNYSON,
LL.D.
ELDEST SON OF GEORGE TENNYSON, ESQ.,
OF BAYONS MANOR,
AND RECTOR OF THIS PARISH
OF BAG ENDERBY AND BENNIWORTH
AND VICAR OF GREAT GRIMSBY
IN THIS COUNTY.
HE DEPARTED THIS LIFE
ON THE 16TH DAY OF MARCH, 1831,
AGED FIFTY-TWO YEARS.

Among the other gravestones there is only one which belongs to the time of Dr. Tennyson's incumbency. This bears the name of Anne

Cooper, who died at the age of ninety-three on the 20th of June, 1811, nearly two years after the poet's birth. Those who are interested in the linking together of distant generations will observe that this carries us back to very nearly the time of the Old Pretender.

The registers of the two parishes are now kept in the rectory-house at Bag Enderby. The entries between 1808 and 1831 are almost invariably in Dr. Tennyson's handwriting, which, it may be noted in passing, is particularly neat.

The first family record that occurs is the entry of the poet's baptism. It is somewhat curiously thrust in, so to speak, as if it had been forgotten at the time, and had been inserted by an after-thought. A hasty observer might easily pass it over altogether. It runs thus :—

In the year 1809, August 8th, Alfred, son of George Clayton and Elizabeth Tennyson, baptized, born August 5th.

All this is written in a single line. The other entries are—

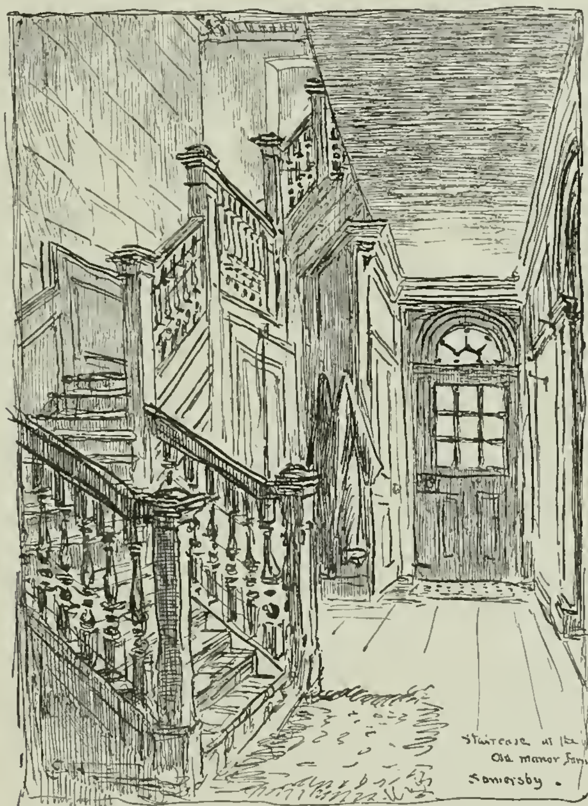
	BORN		BAPTIZED
Charles, ...	July, 4, 1808	...	July 10.
Mary, ...	Sept. 11, 1810	...	Sept. 14.
Emilia, ...	Oct. 25, 1811	...	Oct. 28.
Edward, ...	... ...	...	Jan. 16, 1813.
Arthur, ...	... ...	...	May 12, 1814.
Septimus,...	... ...	...	Sept. 10, 1815.
Matilda, ...	... ...	..	Sept. 13, 1816.
Cecilia, ...	... ...	...	Oct. 10, 1817.
Horatio, ...	... ...	...	Sept. 25, 1819.

The family record of births may be completed by adding the names of two who were born before Dr. Tennyson came to Somersby.

George, born at Tealby, 1806, died in infancy.
Frederic, born June 5, 1807, baptized July 10.

It will be noticed that Charles was baptized *six*, and the next three children *three* days after birth. The birth-date of the other children is not specified, the new act that came into force between the births of Emilia and Edward not requiring it. It has been conjectured that Alfred was baptized in haste because he was a weakly child. But this inference fails in the face of the dates quoted above. It seems,

in fact, to have been Dr. Tennyson's practice to improve, so to speak, on the Prayer-book injunction that the people "defer not the baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday after their birth." So far from being weakly they must have been more than usually strong to render the proceeding safe, one might even say possible. I have indeed heard that "Here's a leg for a babe of a week!" which the "grand-



Staircase in the Manor Farm Somersby

mother" remembers the doctor saying of her eldest-born, is a reminiscence of Alfred Tennyson's infancy, told him long ago by his mother.

Something must be said, but of a negative rather than a positive kind, about another spot in Somersby.

Almost adjoining the old rectory stands a house known as the Manor Farm, but now divided into labourers' dwellings. It is a heavy, gloomy-

looking building, which certainly does no credit, as far at least as its exterior is concerned, to the architect who is said to have designed it, Sir John Vanbrugh. Its sombre aspect has suggested, one may suppose, that it is the original of the "moated grange" in which the poet places the deserted Mariana. There is absolutely nothing else to favour the idea, and much that directly contradicts it. The house has no "ancient thatch" that is "weeded and worn," nor is there any "sluice with blacken'd waters," sleeping near it. Least of all can it be said that, save for the one poplar that

> "Shook alway,
> All silver-green with gnarled bark;
> For leagues no other tree did mark
> The level waste, the rounding gray."

It is, on the contrary, surrounded with trees. The fact is that this is a more than usually absurd instance of the tendency to find originals for all the scenes that the poet describes. "They will not allow that one has any imagination," said Lord Tennyson to the writer of this book a few weeks ago, in reference to some quite groundless identification of this kind that was mentioned to him.[1]

It is quite possible, even likely, that one or two details in the picture of the "moated grange" may have been suggested by what the poet had seen, not so much at Somersby as in the fen country which lies not many miles away from it. That country is "level" and "treeless" for leagues, though certainly not a "waste," and over its dykes

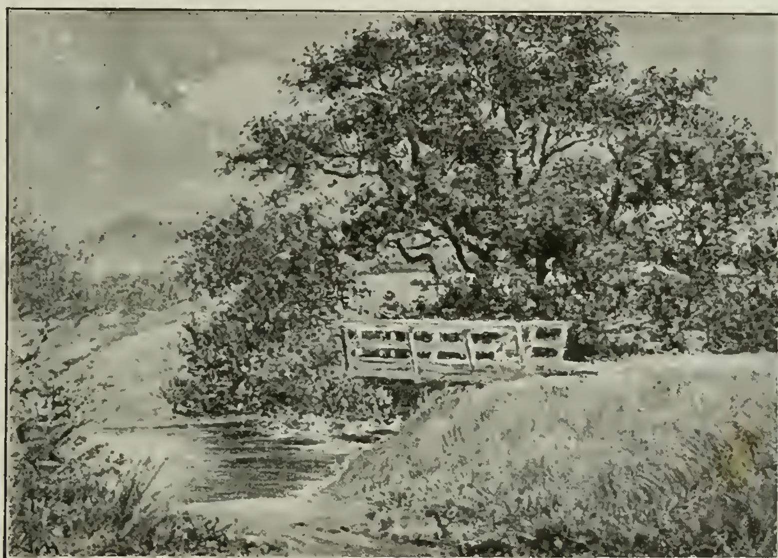
> "Round and small,
> The cluster'd marish-mosses creep."

Students of Tennyson will remember that the plants and flowers of the marsh are not unfrequent features in his poetry. And, to refer to a poem that I shall have occasion to quote again, "a gray old grange" and "a low morass" are among the features of the landscape as seen from the heights of the wolds.

In 1816 Alfred Tennyson went to the Grammar School of Louth. Of

[1] Perhaps I may venture to complete the anecdote. Lord Tennyson went on: "Why, if I were to describe a respectable clergyman, they would say that I had copied it from Mr. Church."

this more will be said in its proper place. He remained there till the end of 1820, learning, as far as he remembers, but very little. (He had previously, it should be said, been taught the rudiments by a village schoolmaster who came up to the rectory to instruct him and his brothers.) The substance of his education was given him by his father, a man of large attainments and varied accomplishments, during the following eight years. Much, of course, was self-acquired, for he was always a great reader. At the same time it is probable that the recollections of his boyhood and early youth, as they



A Bridge on Somersby Brook

have been given to curious inquirers by old inhabitants, have received some colour from what they had heard of his after career. The picture of the shy student, wandering about book in hand, or wrapped in some deep reverie, does not agree with the poet's own recollections of his life at Somersby. One of his most vivid recollections is of how he and his elder brother Charles were wont to defend one of the bridges over the Somersby brook against superior numbers of the village boys. Against three or four or even five they could hold their own, but on one occasion when the attacking force doubled this last number, they were obliged, he remembers, to retreat.

In the autumn of 1828 Alfred Tennyson went up to Trinity College, Cambridge. In March 1831, as has been said, his father died. In the poem "To J. S.,"[1] a poem that contains not a few pathetic anticipations of *In Memoriam*, he refers to this loss.

> "Alas!
> In grief I am not all unlearn'd;
> Once thro' mine own doors Death did pass;
> One went, who never hath return'd.
>
> "He will not smile—not speak to me
> Once more. Two years[2] his chair is seen
> Empty before us. That was he
> Without whose life I had not been."

It is a necessity not the less sad because it is inevitable that to a clergyman's family the loss of the father commonly means the loss of the home. Dr. Tennyson's widow and children were, for a time at least, spared this sorrow. Mrs. Tennyson was able to rent the rectory-house from her husband's successor, and continued to reside there until the autumn of 1835.

Meanwhile a great friendship, one of the most famous and fruitful of which the world holds record, had begun and ended for Alfred Tennyson. Going up to Cambridge somewhat late in Michaelmas Term, 1828, he found among his fellow freshmen, to use the technical term for students of the first year, Arthur Hallam, elder son of the great historian. What he was, of what great gifts, and yet greater promise, need not be said here. It may be found set forth with matchless dignity and pathos in *In Memoriam*, surely the noblest epitaph that was ever written for man. Yet, lest any one should think that the poet has idealized his lost friend, or that there was something of a father's partiality in what we read in the Preface to

[1] "J. S." are the initials of James Spedding, afterwards the biographer of Francis Bacon. (It would be an offence to speak of the great philosopher in this connection by the popular name of "Lord Bacon," a name against which Spedding always protested.) The brother for whose loss Tennyson offers his consolation was Thomas Spedding, a college friend of the poet's, who died in early manhood.

[2] The date of the poem is fixed, it will be observed, and for the early part of 1833, "two years" after March 1831.

his *Remains*,[1] that "he seemed to tread the earth as a spirit from some better world," I may quote the words, never before published I believe, in which another friend, Henry Alford, afterwards Dean of Canterbury, himself eminent as a theologian, scholar, and poet, was accustomed to describe him:[2] "His was such a lovely nature that life seemed to have nothing more to teach him."

There was more than twelve months' difference in the ages of the two, Alfred Tennyson being slightly older, and Arthur Hallam nearly a year younger than students commonly are when they commence residence at the University. But close intimacy soon grew up between them. Of this something more will be said hereafter in the chapter on Cambridge. At present I am concerned with the visits which, as a natural consequence of this friendship, the dweller in town paid to the dweller in the country. These visits are commemorated in lines which bring before us the Somersby garden:—

"How often, hither wandering down,
My Arthur found your shadows fair,
And shook to all the liberal air
The dust and din and steam of town:

"He brought an eye for all he saw;
He mix'd in all our simple sports;
This pleased him, fresh from brawling courts,
And dusty purlieus of the law.

"O joy to him in this retreat,
Immantled in ambrosial dark,
To drink the cooler air, and mark
The landscape winking thro' the heat:

"O sound to rout the brood of cares,
The sweep of scythe in morning dew,
The gust that round the garden flew,
And tumbled half the mellowing pears!"

These stanzas would seem to bear a special reference to the summer of 1832 and possibly that of 1833. Arthur Hallam had taken his degree

[1] *Remains of Arthur H. Hallam.*
[2] The words were given me by a relative of the Dean.

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in the former year, and had entered as a student at one of the Inns of Court, more, we are given to understand, to please his father than himself. He had left college, it may be mentioned, without attempting to obtain academical honours. These, it would seem, were little thought of by what may be called his set. Archdeacon Hare, in his memoir of John Sterling, regrets that the subject of his notice did not take much part in the regular course of University studies, and adds, "of the genial young men who go to Cambridge many do not." He laments the fact, rightly judging that it is a misfortune for a young man to "lose the disciplinary influence of a prescribed system."

The period during which this great friendship was privileged to endure is given in the twenty-second poem of *In Memoriam* :—

> "The path by which we twain did go,
> Which led by tracts that pleased us well,
> Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,
> From flower to flower, from snow to snow :
>
> "And we with singing cheer'd the way,
> And, crown'd with all the season lent,
> From April on to April went,
> And glad at heart from May to May :
>
> "But where the path we walk'd began
> To slant the fifth autumnal slope,
> As we descended following Hope,
> There sat the Shadow fear'd of man."

The friendship had come to full maturity, we may understand, in the early months of 1829, and its "fair companionship" was broken in the autumn of 1833.

One incident belonging to its course may be mentioned, because it illustrates in an interesting way the temper of what may be called the "Young England" of Alfred Tennyson's youth. The Constitutional party in Spain had been crushed by the action of the French Government in 1823; and its chief members were in exile. The expulsion of Charles X. by the Revolution of July, 1830, and the accession of the "Citizen King" had

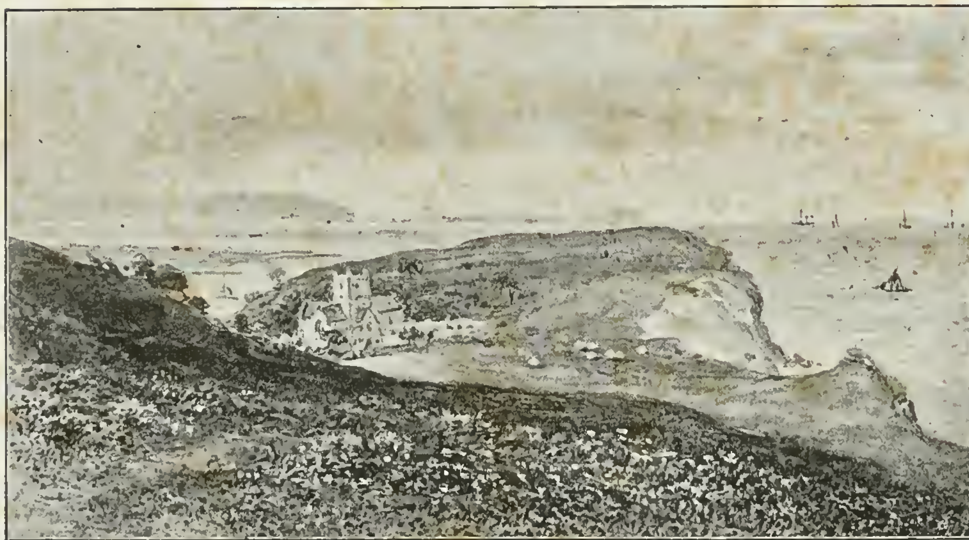
revived the hopes of the exiles. Aided by the benevolent neutrality of the new French Government, which was indeed afraid to interfere with a movement in high favour with the Parisians, they assembled a force on the frontier. It is needless to tell the story of their attempt to overthrow the Government of Ferdinand VII. It was a miserable failure. Not only were the means that the refugees had at their command insufficient for the purpose, their forces never amounting to a thousand men, but they were not agreed among themselves, and there was no party worthy of the name in the nation itself on whose support they could rely. But for a time their efforts excited the greatest enthusiam in England. Some of the most promising young men of the time did their best to help them. Among these were Richard Trench, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, John Sterling, who was on terms of intimate friendship with one of the best of the revolutionists, General Torrijos, and the two friends Arthur Hallam and Alfred Tennyson. These last made an attempt to deliver some supplies of money and letters written in invisible ink to refugees who were in hiding somewhere near the Pyrenees border. This they succeeded in doing, and it is possible that they were somewhat disenchanted by their actual experiences of the patriots whom they were anxious to help. Miss Thackeray tells a story of this time which, as I have myself heard it, I shall take the liberty of repeating. The young travellers met a certain Señor Ojevas, and heard from him his intention, *couper la gorge à tous les curés*. His English—or was it his French ?—failed him when he would have set forth his hopes and plans more fully. "Mais," said he, "vous connaissez mon cœur." The poet, who had not, and who, indeed, never has, accepted the maxim of Continental revolutionists—*La Cléricalisme, c'est l'ennemi*—thought to himself that the heart was a black one.

On September 15th, 1833, Arthur Hallam died suddenly at Vienna, the cause of death being a rush of blood to the head. His father was with him at the time, and made arrangements that the remains of his son should be transported to England. The body was taken down to Trieste, and from that place (the "Italian shore" of *In Memoriam*, ix.) brought

over to this country. Two pictures of the landscape seen from the hills of the Wold country connect themselves with this time. One is of a still morning in mid-autumn:

"Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
And on these dews that drench the furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold:

"Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main."



Clevedon, Somerset

The same calm, the poet fancies, is on the seas across which the "fair ship" is carrying his "lost Arthur's loved remains." The next picture is late in the year. It is not now that the leaves are "reddening to the fall," but "the last red leaf is whirled away." It is a stormy scene that the poet sees in imagination from the familiar hills:—

"The forest crack'd, the water curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea;
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world:"

At last, but not till after what seemed to those waiting in England a long

CLEVEDON CHURCH

delay, the ship safely reached its port, and the body was carried down to the spot which had been chosen for its last resting-place. This was the church of Clevedon, a Somersetshire village, some sixteen miles south-west of Bristol (Arthur Hallam's mother was a daughter of Sir Abraham Elton, of Clevedon Court). The body lies in a vault in the transept, on the west wall of which is a memorial tablet, bearing this inscription :—

TO THE MEMORY OF
ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM,
OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, B.A.,
ELDEST SON OF HENRY HALLAM, ESQUIRE,
AND OF JULIA MARIA HIS WIFE,
DAUGHTER OF SIR ABRAHAM ELTON, BART.,
OF CLEVEDON COURT,
WHO WAS SNATCHED AWAY BY SUDDEN DEATH
AT VIENNA, ON SEPT. 15TH, 1833,
IN THE 23RD YEAR OF HIS AGE.
AND NOW IN THIS OBSCURE AND SOLITARY CHURCH
REPOSE THE MORTAL REMAINS OF
ONE TOO EARLY LOST FOR PUBLIC FAME,
BUT ALREADY CONSPICUOUS AMONG HIS CONTEMPORARIES
FOR THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GENIUS,
THE DEPTH OF HIS UNDERSTANDING,
THE NOBLENESS OF HIS DISPOSITION,
THE FERVOUR OF HIS PIETY,
AND THE PURITY OF HIS LIFE.
VALE DULCISSIME,
VALE DILECTISSIME, DESIDERATISSIME,
REQUIESCAS IN PACE,
PATER AC MATER POSTHAC REQUIESCAMUS TECUM
USQUE AD TUBAM.

LIBRARY

This is the tablet and this the inscription which the poet was wont to picture to himself when he was far away in his own Lincolnshire home :—

"When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest,
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls:

"Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years."

We find the Lincolnshire home now and again associated with recollections of the lost friend. Now it is the garden with which these memories are connected, the garden, where, in old days,

> "all in circle drawn
> About him, heart and ear were fed
> To hear him, as he lay and read
> The Tuscan poets on the lawn."

It is summer again, the second summer, we may conjecture, after the day of separation :—

> "By night we linger'd on the lawn,
> For underfoot the herb was dry ;
> And genial warmth ; and o'er the sky
> The silvery haze of summer drawn ;
>
> "And calm that let the tapers burn
> Unwavering ; not a cricket chirr'd :
> The brook alone far-off was heard,
> And on the board the fluttering urn."

The poet is left alone ; he tells us—

> "I read
> Of that glad year which once had been,
> In those fall'n leaves which kept their green,
> The noble letters of the dead :"

till he is lifted at last to the high plane of a rare experience, lying above the strait bounds of sense which hedge in our mortal life—

> "The dead man touch'd me from the past,
> And all at once it seem'd at last
> The living soul was flash'd on mine,
>
> "And mine in this was wound, and whirl'd
> About empyreal heights of thought,
> And came on that which is, and caught
> The deep pulsations of the world,
>
> "Æonian music measuring out
> The steps of Time—the shocks of Chance—
> The blows of Death."

---

[1] A most unusual thing, indeed scarcely ever observed before that night.

Now it is the whole landscape that recalls the dead :—

"I climb the hill : from end to end
Of all the landscape underneath,
I find no place that does not breathe
Some gracious memory of my friend ;

"No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed,
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

"Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw
That hears the latest linnet trill,
Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw ;

"Nor runlet tinkling from the rock ;
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves
To left and right thro' meadowy curves
That feed the mothers of the flock."

The "rock," it may be noted, is not the imaginary rock that Virgil thrusts into the scenery of his Mantuan plain, simply because there are rocks in the Sicilian landscape of his master Theocritus, but that actually to be found, as has been already mentioned, in the Glen, and sending down actual "runlets" to join the "pastoral rivulet."

In the autumn of 1835 the Tennyson family left Somersby. It is interesting to mark the notes of time as they occur in the *In Memoriam* poems. There is the Christmas of the fatal year when, as the poet says,

"At our old pastimes in the hall
We gambol'd, making vain pretence
Of gladness,

. . . .

We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year."

Then the day comes round (lxxii.),

> "when my crown'd estate begun
> To pine in that reverse of doom,
> Which sicken'd every living bloom,
> And blurr'd the splendour of the sun:"

and then we have a second Christmas (1834) in lxxviii. :—

> "Again at Christmas did we weave
> The holly round the Christmas hearth,
> The silent snow possess'd the earth,
> And calmly fell our Christmas-eve."

But before another year had passed the scene is changed. In civ. we read—

> "The time draws near the birth of Christ;
> The moon is hid, the night is still;
> A single church below the hill
> pealing, folded in the mist.
>
> "A single peal of bells below,
> That wakens at this hour of rest
> A single murmur in the breast,
> That these are not the bells I know."

Before reaching this we have Tennyson's farewell to the place of his birth. He tells us how,

> "Unwatch'd, the garden bough shall sway,
> The tender blossom flutter down,
> Unlov'd, that beech will gather brown,
> This maple burn itself away;
>
> . . . .
>
> "Unlov'd, by many a sandy bar,
> The brook shall babble down the plain."

For now he leaves

> "the well-beloved place
> Where first we gazed upon the sky;
> The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
> Will shelter one of stranger race"

One more note of time the *In Memoriam* gives us. This is in the noble poem which welcomes the marriage day of a sister.[1] "I have not felt," he says,

"so much of bliss
Since first he told me that he loved
A daughter of our house; nor proved
Since that dark day a day like this;

"Tho' I since then have number'd o'er
Some thrice three years." [2]

Arthur Hallam had known her in her childhood—

"O when her life was yet in bud,
He too foretold the perfect rose."

And now she is to be one of the links "that knit the generations each to each," the generations of the past to the happier and nobler generations of the future—

"Whereof the man, that with me trod
This planet, was a noble type
Appearing ere the times were ripe,
That friend of mine who lives in God."

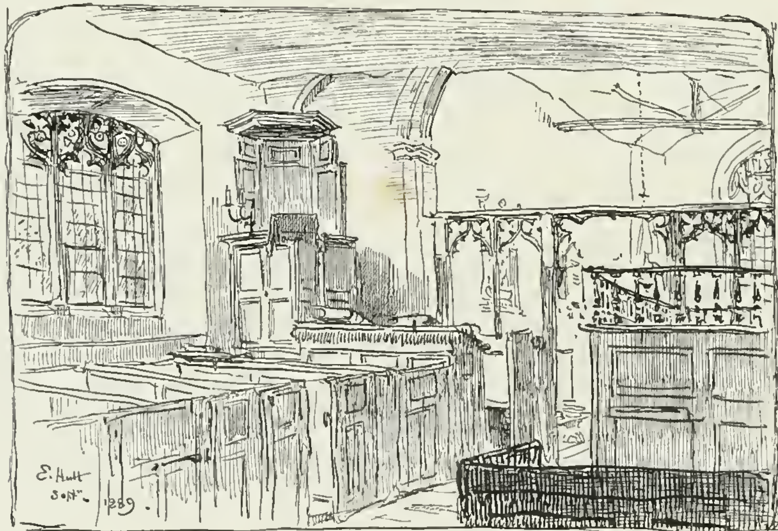
[1] Cecilia, married to Henry Lushington, afterwards Professor of Greek in the University of Glasgow.

[2] The "thrice three years," bring us, it may be noted, to 1842.

IV

BAG ENDERBY

The reader will have noticed that the other benefices held by Dr. Tennyson were Bag Enderby, Benniworth, and Great Grimsby. Of Bag Enderby something must be said. The name is curious, and has given rise to some strange exercises of etymological imagination. One ingenious person suggests that Bag is a corruption of Mag, and Mag



Bag Enderby Church

an abbreviation of Margaret, and finds, of course, an encouraging confirmation of his theory in the fact that the church is dedicated to St. Margaret. The real derivation, for which I am indebted to the present rector, the Rev. John Soper, is simple enough. "Bag" is simply "beck," or brook, the brook being, of course, that which has been already described. This is placed beyond a doubt by the fact that the word "Bec" is to be found on either side of the wards of the massive church key, this key being obviously coeval with the church. The building is

Bag Enderby.

BAG ENDERBY

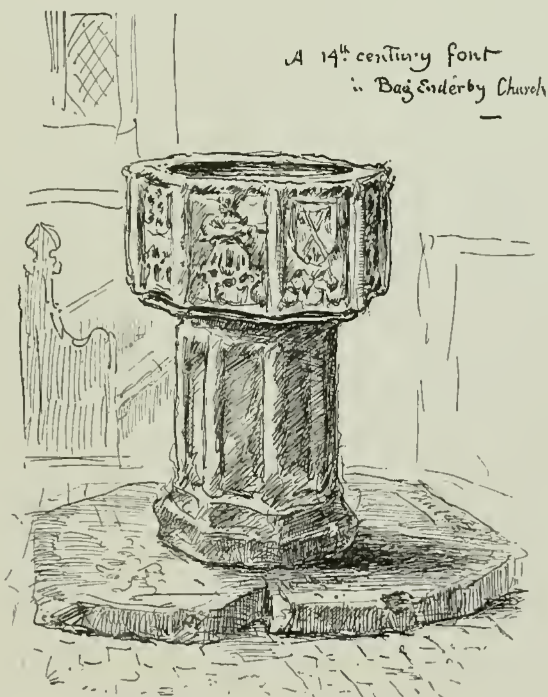
in the same Early Perpendicular style that we find at Somersby, and may, with great probability, be assigned to the same date. This date is fixed with a precision very uncommon in churches of such antiquity. Let into a large flagstone in the central aisle is a brass bearing this inscription :—

Orate pro anima Albini de Enderby qui fecit fieri istam ecclesiam cum campanili qui obiit in vigilia S. Matthiae apostoli, A.D. 1407.

On a similar brass on the adjoining stone we may read—

Thomas Enderby et Agnes sa femme gysonnent ycy. Dieux de lour almes de sa grace cyt mercy.

On the north wall of the chancel is a monument to Andrew Gedney (died 1591) and Dorothy his wife. Not the least interesting thing in the church is the font, elaborately ornamented with sculptures, among which David playing on the harp, and the human soul, under the emblem of the "hart that desireth the waterbrooks," may be noticed. The interior of the church, while decently clean, has happily not been restored. Pews and fittings remain much the same as they were in Dr. Tennyson's time.



Over the south door is the inscription, "Omne quod exoritur terra fit et moritur," and in the centre of the door itself a much worn piece of metal, not unlike the boss of a shield. On closer observation this will be recognized as an ecclesiastical ornament known as the "Glory of the Holy Ghost." It somewhat resembles a sun with rays emanating from it. Traces of a similar ornament may be found on the neighbouring wall.

V

LOUTH

LOUTH may fairly claim, for more reasons than one, to have been a factor in the poet's life. It is a market town with about twelve thousand inhabitants, standing sixth in order of size among the towns of the county. Relatively, it is of less importance now than it was a century ago, when it stood third[1] in the list. Its chief title to fame is its magnificent parish church, one of the finest Perpendicular buildings in England. Its spire, rising to a height of nearly three hundred feet,[2] even claims to be the second in England, Grantham being its competitor, while Salisbury, by common consent, holds the first place.

The town stands on the edge of the Wold district, and has a wide prospect to the eastward, over the marsh. It is a prospect on which the young Tennyson's eyes must often have rested—from his native hills at Somersby the marsh cannot be seen—and it may have imperceptibly tinged his thoughts.

It has been already said that Alfred Tennyson spent some years of his early boyhood at the Grammar School of Louth. It is not difficult to see the reason why he should have been sent there, as indeed were all his brothers. Louth School, an Elizabethan foundation, if not in a very high state of efficiency—and few schools were this in the first quarter of this century—probably ranked as high as any in the county. Practically, Dr. Tennyson would have the choice of sending his sons to that or to the similar foundation at Horncastle, and his preference for Louth would be

[1] Grantham and Gainsborough have outstripped it, as well as Great Grimsby. This last place has grown in a marvellous way. In the last decade of the eighteenth century it numbered less than a thousand inhabitants; nor was it much larger when Dr. Tennyson held the living, which he did, as has been said, in conjunction with Somersby and Bag Enderby, and another benefice. It has now a population of more than fifty thousand.

[2] This was once three hundred and sixty, but the upper part was blown down towards the end of the sixteenth century, and not restored to its original height.

Louth.

LOUTH

determined by his family connection with the place. His wife was a native of the town, being the daughter of the Rev. Stephen Fytche, vicar, who

The Old Grammar School at Louth

died 1799. After Mr. Fytche's death, his widow removed to a house in Westgate Place. Here she lived for many years, and here after her death, an unmarried daughter, Miss Mary Ann Fytche, continued to reside. This house, still to be seen in Westgate Place, was a second home to the young Tennysons.

No one can blame Louth Grammar School for whatever pride it may feel in being able to reckon Alfred Tennyson among its *alumni*. Such pride is a wholesome sentiment, and helps to keep up the tradition of honour which does so much to purify and ennoble school life. As a matter of fact, the poet seems to have owed very little of his real education to it. His recollection of it is that no one learnt much there, and that he learnt very little indeed. There are, of course, various traditions of his

school days. One of these traditions attributes to the head-master of the time, the Rev. J. Waite,[1] the same character that Horace ascribes to his own teacher, Orbilius. He was, it is said, *plagosus*, fond of blows. The tradition is probably true, if for no other reason, because there would have been no little difficulty at that time to find a schoolmaster who was anything else. Recollections of a boy who could hardly have excited the interest of his contemporaries are apt to be tinged by what he is known to have afterwards become, and are probably of little value. It is not difficult, however, to believe that he and his brother Charles were inseparable, and held themselves aloof from other companions. It is a curious fact that brothers at school generally behave to each other as distant acquaintances, but in this case there may very well have been an exception. One definite association with the place, the truth of which the poet acknowledges, is that he took part in a procession which formed part of the town festivities when George IV. came to the throne.

The building pictured in our illustration is the very school in which the Tennyson brothers were taught. It was pulled down some twenty years ago. The figure of King Edward VI. is all that now remains of the old building.

But Louth, however little its school may have contributed to Tennyson's mental development, may certainly claim to have been the place where his earliest attempts at versification were made. The very first line indeed that he composed—

"I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind"—

is attributed by Miss Thackeray, doubtless on the poet's own authority, to an earlier time, when he was five years old. But his first connected pieces were written at Louth. It was here that his brother Charles, who seems to have taken it upon himself, in right of his year's seniority, to act as patron and critic, put a slate into his hand one Sunday morning, when the elders of the family had gone to church, and told him to write some verses on the flowers in the garden, pronouncing, when the verses were shown to him, that

[1] Mr. Waite died in 1872, at the age of ninety-one, having resigned his post some years before

they would do. Lord Tennyson's present recollection, however, inclines to the belief that the first subject of his muse was "The Death of Julius Cæsar."

In another matter the town may fairly take some credit to itself. It can claim to be the place where his first published poems saw the light; and this is a really substantial honour, because the circumstances of the publication show no small amount of spirit and liberality in one of the Louth townsmen. In 1827, a volume entitled *Poems by Two Brothers* was published by Mr. J. Jackson, a bookseller of Louth. The "two brothers" were Charles and Alfred Tennyson. They had originally affixed their initials to the pieces respectively written by them. These were afterwards struck out, and the volume appeared anonymously. A reader who knows anything about the conditions under which verse is published nowadays will learn with no little surprise that Mr. Jackson engaged to pay *ten*, and actually paid *twenty pounds* for the copyright of the volume. Of the merits of the poems it is not necessary to speak. Neither of the authors was willing in after years to recognize, so to speak, any of the pieces that then appeared. And, indeed, they are vastly inferior to the matured work of Charles Turner and Alfred Tennyson. But they are not more inferior than *Hours of Idleness* are to the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* and to *Manfred*. This inferiority makes it difficult for a reader of to-day to estimate with any fairness their intrinsic merit. The comparison is perpetually obtruding itself, and unconsciously warping our judgment. It is quite possible that the poems have more worth than critics are ever likely to see in them. Mr. Jackson had the opportunity of estimating them with a mind entirely free from prepossessions. That he should have entertained at all the notion of publishing a volume of verse is distinctly to his credit. His attitude of mind must have been wholly unlike that of the average country tradesman. And he is fairly entitled to whatever credit may attach to the fact that one of the authors whom he treated so generously was afterwards to be the greatest poet of the century, and the other to be recognized as worthy, to say the least, of his illustrious brother. Louth has a right to be proud of its townsman.

VI

HORNCASTLE

This is a little market-town on the western border of the Wold district. It can trace back its origin to Roman times, though its identification with the *Banovallum* of the geographer of Ravenna is a mistake. But remains of walls that are undoubtedly Roman are yet to be seen in it. Its position at the confluence of two rivers—the Bane and the Waring—doubtless pointed it out as a suitable place for fortification. Next to these Roman remains the most notable thing about the town are the names of some of its localities. The "Bull Ring" is one that needs no explanation; the "Julian Bower Close," a name still given to a piece of land within the town boundaries, is said to recall the *Ludus Trojanus*, a military sport of which the curious may read in any commentary on Virgil, *Æn.* V. A third, the "Wong," is the despair of etymologists.

For us the chief interest of Horncastle is found in the house represented in our picture. It stands in the market-place, at the corner of the churchyard, and is a square, substantial-looking house, one of the best in the town, just such a place, in fact, as a visitor would fix upon as the residence of the principal inhabitant. And it was in fact so occupied for some years during the first half of this century.

Mr. Henry Sellwood came of a family of Berkshire and Somersetshire squires, a family which could claim as high an antiquity as almost any in these counties. It had its days of prosperity, but, a century ago, these were over, thanks to the easy, careless, sometimes extravagant life

which squire after squire for not a few generations had led. With this tradition Henry Sellwood determined to break, and become a solicitor. This was not an easy resolution to make, and a very difficult one to carry out. It was against the dignity of a Sellwood to earn his own living, except as a soldier or a sailor. The times were past when well-born

The Market Place, Horncastle

gentlemen did not disdain to follow a trade,[1] and our own times, in which the sons of dukes become wine merchants and stockbrokers, had not yet arrived. To avoid some of the unpleasantnesses which were certain to follow his change of life, Henry Sellwood settled at Horncastle. His wife was a Franklin, a sister of the famous Arctic navigator, born at Spilsby in Lincolnshire, where her father had inherited a small freehold[2] estate, but had sold it under the pressure of heavy mortgages and the

[1] Thomas Law (father of William Law, author of the "Serious Call"), who lived in the latter half of the seventeenth century was a "gentleman" and the son of a gentleman. But this did not hinder him from keeping a grocer's shop.

[2] It is interesting to note that the word "Franklin" means freeholder, and is applied to the same class described as "statesmen" in some of the northern counties.

wants of a large family. Mrs. Sellwood died at the age of twenty-eight (September 30th, 1816). The slab that marks her tomb is in Horncastle Church. She left three daughters, the youngest of whom married Charles Tennyson, afterwards Turner, who has been already mentioned, and of whom I shall have to say more hereafter under the head of Grasby; the eldest became the wife of the poet. What the union has been the poet himself has told us, in the "Dedication" of one of his volumes, and I may venture to quote the lines:—

> "Dear, near, and true—no truer Time himself
> Can prove you, tho' he make you evermore
> Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
> Shoots to the fall."

VII

TEALBY

Tealby is one of the most picturesque of the Wold villages. Its inhabitants, indeed, claim, and not without reason, that it is the most beautiful of them all. The nearest town is Market Rasen, situated about four miles to the south-west ; but the most effective way of approaching it is from Caistor. The road runs along the ridge of the Wolds through a fertile country, famous for the wheat and barley which it produces, but somewhat monotonous of aspect. After seven of the nine miles which separate Caistor from Tealby have been traversed, the road changes into what is little better than a grassy track, and when it approaches the village makes a very steep descent. The slopes into which the line of the Wolds is here broken are more than usually abrupt, and are fairly diversified with trees.

The church, though without much architectural pretensions, is on a somewhat larger scale than is commonly found among the Wolds. The clerestory windows are a feature not often seen among these humble buildings, which indeed are curiously unlike the magnificent structures so often found in the more level parts of the county. The interior is not without dignity, though most of the detail is late in date and poor. To this however there are exceptions in the Early English pillars that separate the nave from the north aisle, and in the western arch with its dog-tooth ornament.

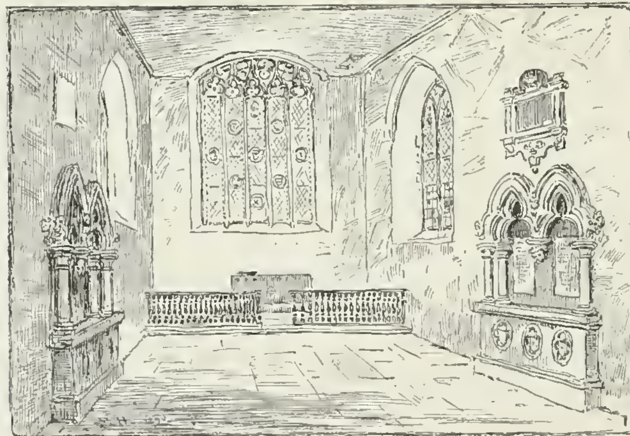
On the walls of the chancel are to be seen the memorial tablets of the Tennyson and the Tennyson d'Eyncourt families. With two of these

we are immediately concerned—those which commemorate the poet's grandfather and grandmother. These are affixed to the south wall, and are as follows:—

TO THE MEMORY OF
GEORGE TENNYSON, Esq.,
OF BAYONS MANOR AND OF USSELBY IN THIS COUNTY,
WHO DIED 9TH OF JULY, 1835,
AGED 85 YEARS.
HE WAS THE SON AND HEIR OF MICHAEL TENNYSON, ESQ., AND ELIZABETH HIS WIFE,
DAUGHTER AND HEIRESS OF GEORGE CLAYTON, ESQ.
HE LEFT SURVIVING HIS TWO DAUGHTERS, ELIZABETH AND MARY,
AND HIS SON, THE RIGHT HON. CHARLES TENNYSON, M.P. FOR LAMBETH,
WHOM HE DIRECTED BY HIS WILL
TO SUPERADD THE NAME OF D'EYNCOURT,
IN ORDER TO COMMEMORATE HIS DESCENT FROM THE TWO ANCIENT FAMILIES
WHO FORMERLY BORE THAT NAME AND TITLE.

A little to the west is the tablet to his wife:—

MARY, the Wife of George Tennyson, Esq., of Bayons Manor.
She died on the 20th of August, 1825, aged 72 years.
She was the daughter of John Turner of Caistor in the County of Lincoln.



Tealby Church

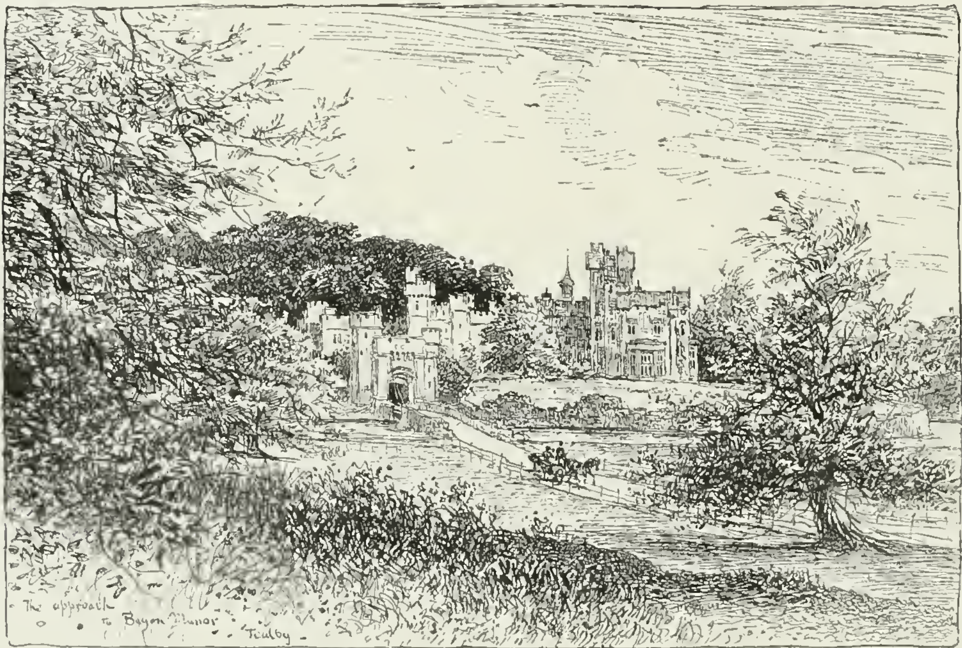
VIII

BAYONS MANOR

THIS manor appears from Domesday Book to have been granted after the Conquest to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, a name which, in a modified form, is supposed to survive in Bayon. From the Bishop it passed to his kindred, the family of de Bayeux, and from them successively to the houses of Beaumont, Lovel, and d'Eyncourt (of the first creation). In 1487, after the battle of Stoke, in which the Lord Lovel, heir of the d'Eyncourts, supported the cause of Lambert Simnel, it was forfeited to the Crown. Henry VIII granted it to Henry Norris, a nephew of the late possessor. Henry Norris was involved in the fate of Anne Boleyn, perishing on the scaffold in 1536. The manor was granted to one Thomas Hatcliffe, and from this family passed into the hands of the Duke of Norfolk, and so, after various changes, into those of the Earls of Scarborough, from whom it was purchased about 1780 by George Tennyson. Mr. Tennyson afterwards added to the estate the adjoining domain of Usselby Hall.

Dying, as we have seen from the inscription already quoted, in 1835, Mr. Tennyson left Bayons Manor to his younger son, Charles (the elder, George Clayton, had predeceased him four years before). He probably entertained the ambition of founding a family, and fancied that the younger son was more likely to fulfil it than any one of the children of the elder. One cannot help observing the curious irony of fate by which it has come about that it is to one of the children thus passed over that the peerage that was the object of George Tennyson's hopes has come. But for his disposition of the property, it might have been the barony of D'Eyncourt, thus for the second time revived.

The mansion of Bayons Manor is at one and the same time a new house and an old. George Tennyson made it a provision of his will that the manor-house should not be pulled down by his heir. The provision was satisfied by the device of enclosing the old building in the new structure. All the exterior that the visitor sees is modern; but within there



Bayons Manor

are rooms and passages that were part of the former dwellings, and not a little complexity of plan is the natural result.

The mansion, as one sees it from the park, a spacious and well-wooded domain, is fine and even imposing in aspect. It is impossible not to regret a certain air of pretence about it. There is a moat which goes but *half* round the house, and which would therefore be wholly useless for those purposes of defence for which moats were made. Indeed, the situation of the mansion, with a steep hill rising immediately behind it, is such that a moat is an impossibility. This, and the sham of a drawbridge which is obviously not intended to be drawn up, take away from the effect of a really dignified piece of architecture. The interior of the house is fine. A hall,

Bayons Manor.

BAYONS MANOR

large and well proportioned, with an open roof, and a music gallery at one end, is the principal feature. There is also a spacious library. Both these are, of course, modern. The actual connection of the poet is with the rooms of the old house. One of these is shown as the chamber which he was accustomed to occupy when he visited his grandfather. An anecdote has been preserved which shows that the old man knew, but did not highly appreciate, his grandson's poetical gifts. He was told, "Your grandson Alfred has made a volume of poems," and replied, "I had sooner have heard that he had made a wheelbarrow."

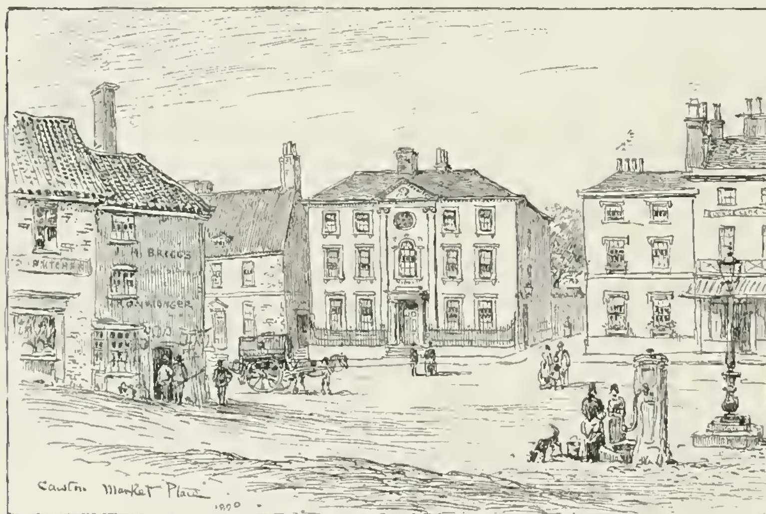
That the house was the birthplace of some of Alfred Tennyson's early poems is certain. Quite recently a paper was discovered in his handwriting containing a translation from Homer into English verse, and there is a tradition of a summer-house the walls of which were covered by scribblings of his pencil. Unfortunately these *graffiti*, to use the word applied to one of the most interesting of the Pompeian antiquities, were obliterated by the village painter.

A brief account of the possessors of Bayons Manor may be found interesting. From George Tennyson it passed, as has been said, to Charles, his younger son. He was then fifty-one years of age, and had sat in Parliament for Great Grimsby, Bletchingly, and Stamford, defeating at this last place a great county magnate in the person of Colonel Chaplin. He had distinguished himself as an ardent advocate for Parliamentary reform, being one of the promoters of the Bill for the disfranchisement of East Retford, with which the battle was, so to speak, opened. After the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, he sat for Lambeth, retiring from the representation in 1852. In the year of his succession to the inheritance of Bayons Manor he took, by Royal license, the name of d'Eyncourt. Dying in 1861, he was succeeded by his son, George Hildyard Tennyson d'Eyncourt, born in 1809. On his death in 1871 the inheritance passed to his brother, Edwin Clayton, Admiral R.N. It has recently been transferred by a family arrangement to the third son, Louis Charles, police magistrate at Westminster, 1851–1890.

IX

CAISTwR

Caistor, approached from Moortown on the Lincoln, Cleethorpe, and Hull branch of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway, is one of the oldest towns in Lincolnshire. It has a fine church, built within the site of an ancient fortress, and containing in the lower part of its tower and



Caistor

in the arch opening into the nave some undoubted remains of Saxon work. Originally a stronghold of the Britons, it became a Roman station. Some remains of the wall may still be seen. From our present point of view the most interesting thing in the town is a house of the Georgian period, which stands in the market-place, and of which a picture is given. This was for many years the residence of the Rev. Samuel Turner, a great-uncle of the

poet.[1] Charles, as we shall see, was his favourite nephew, and both Charles and Alfred were not unfrequently his guests.

An interesting anecdote has been told me of an occurrence which might have curiously changed the future. The grandfather and grandmother of the poet had been sitting in their courting days on the curbstone in front of the Caistor house. A few moments after they rose a huge coping stone fell from the roof on to the very place.

Mr. Turner, whose portrait still hangs on the walls of his house, was a clergyman of the old school. In his day (he died in 1833 at the age of seventy-nine), every clergyman, if he was lucky enough to find patrons, was a pluralist, and parishes were frequently content with a fortnightly or even a monthly service. Mr. Turner was Vicar of Grasby, Rector of Rothwell, and held besides the curacy of Caistor, where he resided.[2] He left his property to his great-nephew Charles, of whom something will be said in the following chapter.

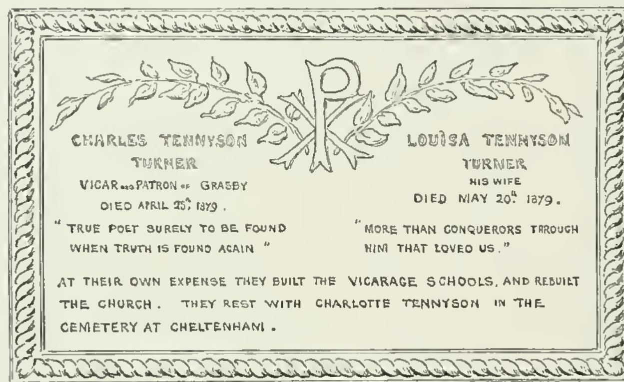
[1] The poet's grandfather, George Tennyson, married Mary, the daughter of John Turner. Samuel Turner was a son of this John Turner.

[2] A story is told of one of these many-cured Lincolnshire parsons, a divine who was probably a neighbour and contemporary of Samuel Turner. He had added a fresh curacy to sundry charges which he already held. It was the curacy of a particularly inaccessible village on the southern bank of the Humber, and its new parson found it convenient to intermit even the very rare services which it had been customary to hold there. For a whole winter the church remained unserved. This came to the ears of the Bishop, and he, though bishops were longsuffering in those days, felt it to be his duty to remonstrate. "My lord," said the curate, when summoned to the episcopal presence, "no harm can have been done, for I am sure that the Devil himself could not get to X—— in the winter."

X

GRASBY

On the south wall of the chancel of Grasby Church is a memorial tablet of white marble—its design copied from one to be found in the Roman Catacombs—which we here engrave.



Grasby, a pleasant little village on the western, or, to speak more accurately, the south-western slope of the Wolds, was for more than forty years the home of Charles Tennyson Turner. Some mention has already been made of him,[1] but the history of one who was so closely connected with Alfred Tennyson's intellectual life may well have a further notice.

Charles Tennyson graduated in 1832, and took orders in 1835. Three years later he had succeeded to the inheritance of his great-uncle, Samuel Turner of Caistor, and, fulfilling a condition of his inheritance, had taken the additional name of Turner. For a time he was Curate of Tealby,[2] and in 1836 became Vicar of Grasby, the advowson of the living having been part of the property which had come to him from his great-uncle.

The reader has learnt from the memorial inscription an outline of what Charles Turner did for the parish which, with an interval of compulsory absence caused by illness, he made his home from youth to old age. Many clergymen have done as much, though scarcely with the same open-

[1] See pp. 52 *et seq.* [2] See p. 57.

handed generosity ;[1] but very few have left behind them such a name for all that is good and gracious.

Mr. Turner published a volume of *Sonnets* in 1830, and another in 1864, a volume entitled *Small Tableaux* in 1868, and another, *Sonnets, Lyrics, and Translations,* in 1873. The year after his death, a volume of *Collected Sonnets, Old and New* (Macmillan), appeared with an introductory

Grasby Vicarage

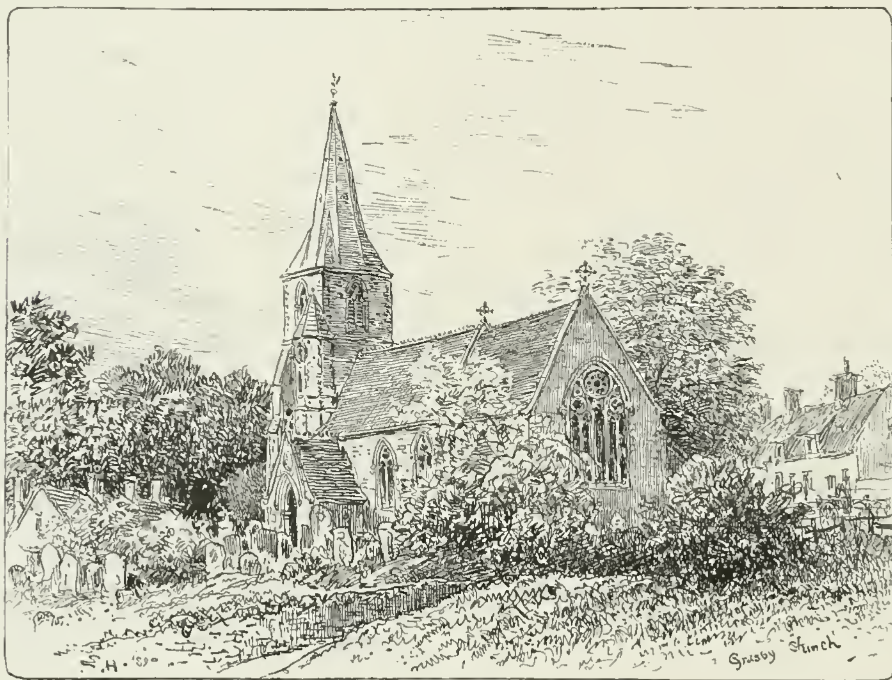
essay by James Spedding, who had been one of his contemporaries at Cambridge (James Spedding graduated in 1831), edited by his nephew Hallam Tennyson.

These sonnets, though not formed on the strict sonnet model,[2] are

[1] The story of the rebuilding of the church may be told as a sample of what was Mr. Turner's habitual temper. He had been induced, very much against his will, to take proceedings against an agent who had for some time managed his property, and had not, as Mr. Turner's friends believed, duly accounted for the proceeds. He was successful in his suit, and recovered the sum of £3,000. This he devoted to the rebuilding of the church, which indeed is practically a new edifice, though the architect has preserved the Early English pillars between the nave and the north aisle, and an arch with dog-tooth ornament over the south doorway. It should be said that he spent much more than the £3,000.

[2] They are not entirely uniform, but it may be said generally of them that the rhymes are less elaborate. The orthodox sonnet has two quadruple and two triple rhymes. Mr. Turner's, for the most part, four double and two triple rhymes ; sometimes they consist wholly of double rhymes.

often singularly happy, and have all the exquisite finish and unity of thought which befit this kind of poem. They are full of the associations of Grasby—the willow which he had set for a rose-prop in his garden, and which had grown almost unawares into a tall tree;[1] the nightingales which he intro-



Grasby Church

duced into the place, and had the satisfaction of acclimatizing; the school feast, which makes him think how, "ere a new feast-day shall shine,"

> "Another head in childhood's cause may plot,
> Another Pastor muse in this same spot;"

the church clock striking the hour of noon, and which he loves because "it tells us boldly how we pass away," are some of the things which he commemorates in verse which shows the quick eye and tender heart of a true lover of nature. One sonnet I may venture to quote because it happily exemplifies both his feeling and his art—

[1] A characteristic story is told of Charles Turner's love of trees. Just outside the larder may be seen the stump of what must have been a splendid specimen of the willow. He paid £10 to the owner of the tree on the condition that it should not be cut down in his lifetime.

THE OAK AND THE HILL.

"When the storm fell'd our oak, and thou, fair wold,
Wert seen beyond it, we were slow to take
The lesson taught, for our old neighbour's sake.
We thought thy distant presence wan and cold,
And gave thee no warm welcome; for whene'er
We tried to dream him back into his place,
Where late he stood a giant of his race,
'Twas but to lift an eye, and thou wert there,
His sad remembrancer, the monument
That told us he was gone; but thou hast blent
Thy beauty with our love so long and well,
That in all future griefs we may foretell
Some lurking good behind each seeming ill,
Beyond each fallen tree some fair blue hill."

The community of feeling and experience between the brothers Charles and Alfred is beautifully described in *In Memoriam*, lxxix. :—

"'More than my brothers are to me,'—
Let this not vex thee, noble heart!
I know thee of what force thou art
To hold the costliest love in fee.

"But thou and I are one in kind,
As moulded like in Nature's mint;
And hill and wood and field did print
The same sweet forms on either mind.

"For us the same cold streamlet curl'd
Thro' all his eddying coves; the same
All winds that roam the twilight came,
In whispers of the beauteous world.

"At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,
One lesson from one book we learn'd
Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd
To black and brown on kindred brows."

More than forty years afterwards we have the last expression of this life-long affection. The poem, prefixed to the *Collected Sonnets*, is dated "Midnight, June 30th, 1879," when time had made it possible, we may suppose, for the survivor to give words to the sorrow that had been in his heart, and to the thought of what they had been to each other—

"When all my griefs were shared with thee,
And all my hopes were thine."

XI

THE LINCOLNSHIRE COAST

THE Lincolnshire coast, in common with the greater part of that which stretches between the Humber and the Thames, is tame and uninteresting. None of the few spots which break the monotony of the eastern sea-board of England lie within its borders. It has nothing to show like Cromer, jutting boldly out into the sea; or Dunwich, with its fine background of moorland, and its tradition of a great past, when it was the seat of the East Anglian Bishops. The shore of Holland, the southernmost division of the county, consists of vast mud-flats, which might be turned into corn-land, only that corn-land, in these days, does not repay the cost of cultivation, much less of reclamation. This almost inaccessible region past, villages begin to dot the shore. Some of these, as Skegness, and Sutton-on-the-Sea, and Mablethorpe, and Cleethorpes, have been enlarged by modern enterprise into watering-places which are popular, if not fashionable. They have the merit of being easily accessible from the midland towns, but, beyond the fresh breezes from the sea, scarcely any other attraction. Whatever charm the coast with its monotonous sand-hills and its dull colourless waters may possess is a charm largely dependent upon solitude. There are places which even a crowd cannot spoil, but such a spot as that which is represented in our picture would not attract either the artist or the lover of scenery were it peopled with a crowd of miscellaneous visitors. But the lonely stretches even of this dull shore are not without a certain beauty. Whether there is sunshine to bring out the yellow of the sand and the blue-green of the sea-holly, or the more suitable accompaniments

The Lincolnshire Coast

THE LINCOLNSHIRE COAST

of a roaring wind and low scudding clouds, there is something to impress us, though it appeals rather, it may be said, to the imagination than to the eye. Here we may find the originals of

> "the sandy tracts,
> And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts."

And here certainly,

> "The drain-cut levels of the marshy lea—
> Gray sandbanks and pale sunsets,—dreary wind,
> Dim shores, dense rains, and heavy clouded sea!"

It is needless to connect our picture with any particular spot, but it may be noted that Somersby is something less than fifteen miles from the sea. The nearest spot on the coast would even now be found sufficiently solitary; and Mablethorpe, where a house is shown as having been that in which the poet's family sometimes spent a few weeks in the summer, was not thronged sixty years ago with the crowd which the railways now discharge into it.

XII

CAMBRIDGE

In October, 1828, as has been already said, Tennyson went up to reside at Trinity College, Cambridge. He had been previously entered as a "pensioner"[1] on November 9th, 1827. His two elder brothers were already in residence; and there was a fourth Tennyson, a cousin, also at Cambridge. The tutor to whom both Charles and Alfred Tennyson were assigned[2] was William Whewell, afterwards Master of the College. Whewell had then been recently elected to the Professorship of Mineralogy.

The college books show that Alfred Tennyson came up too late in the Michaelmas term of the academical year 1828–29 to keep the six weeks of residence required, and that he resided for the whole of the academical year 1829–30, and for the first term of the next, 1830–31, leaving college about the end of February. This premature departure from the University, which, it will be seen, he left without graduating, was due to his father's death. Frederick and Charles graduated in 1832.

Though Alfred Tennyson's academical career was incomplete it was not undistinguished. For the honours to be won in the University examinations, the Mathematical and the Classical Tripos, he and his immediate

[1] It may be as well to explain, for the benefit of such of my readers as are not acquainted with academical terms, that undergraduates were entered under the three designations of fellow-commoners, pensioners, and sizars. A fellow-commoner was, so to speak, a superior being, who, in consideration of larger payments, enjoyed certain privileges, such as dining at the high, or Fellows' table. A sizar, on the other hand, was a poor student, who received certain emoluments from the college, and so had his expenses reduced below the average standard. The pensioner was an ordinary student; paying the usual fees, and receiving no allowances. In describing the present condition of things a fourth designation, "scholar," would have to be added. The scholars at the time of which I am writing were elected from undergraduates, pensioners or sizars, actually in residence. This indeed is still the case with the scholars proper, but *minor* scholars, as they are called, are now chosen by open competition from candidates presenting themselves from schools, &c.

[2] Every student entering the college is assigned to a tutor, who exercises a certain supervision over his course of study, his expenditure, and conduct in general.

friends seem to have had little ambition. Most of them were content with an ordinary, or, as it was then called, a "poll"[1] degree. The only other distinctions to be won were the University prizes and scholarships. Charles was bracketed with the successful Bell scholars, on account of his admirable classical papers (the mathematics he did not touch): the prize for a Greek ode was obtained by Frederick Tennyson in 1828, and in 1829 Alfred obtained the Chancellor's Medal for English verse, the subject of his poem being *Timbuctoo.* At that time Africa was as much "in the air" as it is now. The exploits of a series of intrepid explorers, among whom may be mentioned Houghton, Mungo Park, Denham, Clapperton, and the Landers, had excited the public interest. Timbuctoo, which had long been the *Ultima Thule* of African discovery, had been recently visited for the first time by a young Frenchman.

The poet tells a curious story of the way in which this English verse prize came to be won. His father imagined, not, it may be, wholly without reason, that his son was doing very little at the University, and knowing that he had a certain gift for writing verse, told him that he ought to compete for the Chancellor's Medal. Alfred Tennyson had composed, two years before, a poem on the *Battle of Armageddon.* This he took, furnished it with a new beginning and a new end, and sent it in for the theme of *Timbuctoo.*

Timbuctoo was written in blank verse. This was a daring innovation on academical traditions. The prize, founded in 1813 by the Duke of Gloucester, then Chancellor of the University, had always before been adjudged to a poem written in the orthodox heroic couplet. Against blank verse in particular, so easy to write badly, so difficult to write well,

[1] From the Greek οἱ πολλοί, "the many." Candidates who passed the examination for an ordinary degree were arranged in order of merit in a long list which was known by the name of the Poll. To be "Captain of the Poll," that is, first in this list, was held to be a distinction of some value. Honours could be obtained in Mathematics and Classics (the honours in Law were never held in any account), but no one was allowed to compete in Classics except he had previously taken honours in Mathematics.

there was a strong and not ill-founded prejudice, and it says much for the vigour and originality of the poem, and it is only fair to add, for the liberal and open-minded temper of the examiners,[1] that the metre was not considered a disqualification.

I have thought it right not to quote from, or even to mention by name, any poem which Lord Tennyson's mature judgment has not thought proper to include in the later collections of his works. This, it must be owned, is somewhat of a self-denying ordinance. Not only has the severe taste of the author rejected much that most readers would probably agree in thinking very good, but there is also a natural, and, we may say, not illegitimate, interest in observing how practice betters the work even of a supremely skilful workman. Still, in such a matter the wish of the author ought to be final. A prize poem, however, seems to stand on a somewhat different footing. By the very nature of the case it has been given to the world beyond recall. It has become a part of academical history. It is one of the notes which indicate the thought and culture of the time. The writer, one may safely say, would not wish, even if he were able, to take it from its place in the records of the University, even if he does not choose to include it in his works. The poet's treatment of his theme is singularly bold, and offers a remarkable contrast to the rhetoric, sometimes elevated but always conventional, of the exercises which are commonly honoured with academical prizes. In this boldness, showing as it does the real touch of genius, and, not unfrequently, in the stately music of the verse, we see the great poet of the future. The subject was one which, handled by a versifier of ordinary powers, might easily have been made dull and unpoetical. The special danger would be in dwelling on the details of African travel or African scenery—matters of which, as has been said, the publications of the day were very full. This danger the poet wholly escapes, lifting his subject on to a quite

[1] Their names, which it seems only an act of justice to give, were Thomas Crick, Fellow of St. John's, who succeeded Christopher Wordsworth in the office of Public Orator (1836), Edward Baines, Fellow of Christ's, Julius Charles Hare, and Connop Thirlwall.

different plane of thought. The central idea of the poem may be said to be the relation of Fable and Truth.

The poet, standing on

> "the mountain which o'erlooks
> The narrow sea whose rapid interval
> Parts Afric from green Europe,"

muses on the great legends of the past, such as were those that had pictured Atalantis and

> "Imperial Eldorado, roofed with gold,"

and asks—

> "Wide Afric, doth thy Sun
> Lighten, thy hills enfold, a city as fair
> As those which starred the night o' the elder world?"

He is answered by a Spirit who opens the eyes of his soul, till

> "each failing sense,
> As with a momentary flash of light,
> Grew thrillingly distinct and keen."

"I saw," he goes on,

> "The smallest grain that dappled the dark earth,
> The indistinctest atom in deep air,
> The moon's white cities, and the opal width
> Of her small glowing lakes, her silver heights
> Unvisited with dew of vagrant cloud,
> And the unsounded, undescended depth
> Of her black billows."

Among the glories thus revealed to him is the sight of the great African city—

> "Within the South methought I saw
> A wilderness of spires and chrystal pile
> Of rampart upon rampart, dome on dome,
> Illimitable range of battlement
> On battlement, and the Imperial height
> Of canopy o'er-canopied."

Finally, the Spirit explains the secret of his being :—

"I am the Spirit,
The permeating life which courseth through
All th' intricate and labyrinthine veins
Of the great vine of Fable, which, outspread
With growth of shadowing leaf and clusters rare,
Reacheth to every corner under heaven,
Deep-rooted in the living soil of truth."

But the time was near when this the Spirit's latest throne would have to be yielded up to "keen discovery" :—

"Soon yon brilliant towers
Shall darken with the waving of the wand ;
Darken, and shrink and shiver into huts,
Black specks amidst a waste of dreary sand,
Low-built, mud-walled barbarian settlements."

Who were the competitors who had to yield the prize to this composition we have no means of knowing, except, indeed, in the case of one name. Arthur Hallam sent in an exercise written in the *terza rima* which his study of the Tuscan poets, already, as we may conjecture, commenced, had made familiar to him. It will be interesting to compare with the extracts from the successful poem already given a specimen of Hallam's composition :—

"Thy palaces and pleasure-domes to me
Are matter of strange thought ; for sure thou art
A splendour in the wild ; and aye to thee
Did visible guardians of the Earth's great heart
Bring their choice tributes culled from many a mine—
Diamond, and jasper, porphyry, and the art
Of figured chrysolite : nor silver shrine
There wanted, nor the mightier power of gold.

"So wert thou reared of yore, City divine.
And who are they, of blisses manifold,
That dwelt within thee ? Spirits of delight,
It may be spirits whose pure thoughts enfold
Some eminence of Being, all the light
That interpenetrates this mighty all,
And doth endure in its own beauty's sight.
And oh ! the vision was majestical."

Timbuctoo received a few weeks after its publication a remarkable notice in the *Athenæum*. This was written by John Sterling, and is worth quoting :—

"We have accustomed ourselves to think, perhaps without any very good reason, that poetry was likely to perish among us for a very considerable period after the great generation of poets which is now passing away. The age seems determined to contradict us, and that in the most decided manner, for it has put forth poetry by a young man, and that where we should least expect to find it—in a prize poem. These productions have often been ingenious and elegant, but we have never before seen one which indicated really first-rate poetic genius, and which would have done honour to any man that ever wrote. Such we do not hesitate to affirm is the little work before us, and the examiners seem to have felt about it like ourselves, for they have assigned the prize to its author, although the measure in which he writes was never before (we believe) thus selected for honour."

The reviewer then quotes some forty lines—the verses already given,[1] beginning "The smallest grain," being among them—and he adds, "How many men have lived for a century that could equal that ?"

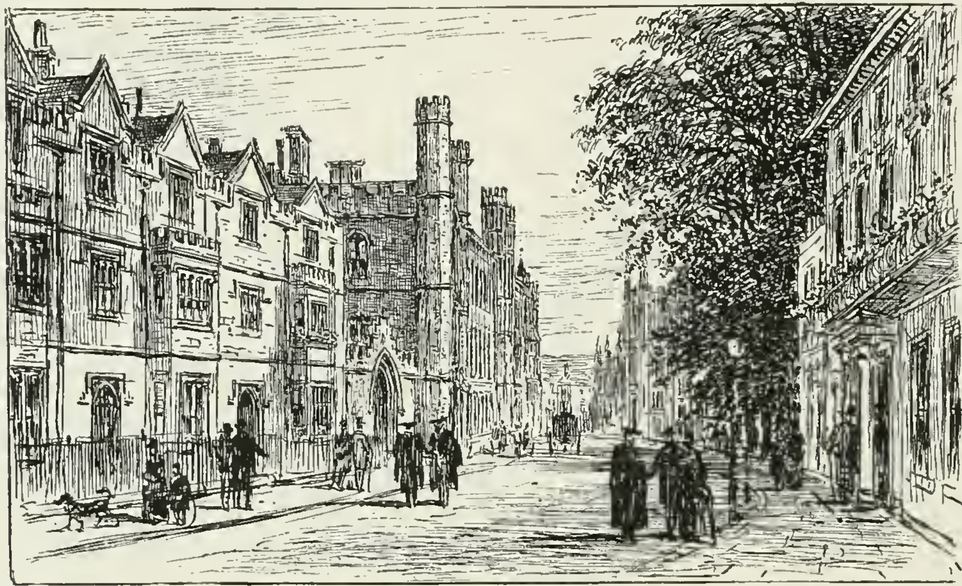
The writer of this notice was, it should be said, acquainted with the author of *Timbuctoo*, and had some private knowledge of his powers, which were already remarkable. Still, his critical insight, and the courage with which he pronounces an opinion that must have seemed somewhat extravagant at the time, are noteworthy. Some names that afterwards became eminent were already included in the list of winners of the prize. Macaulay, Praed, and Christopher Wordsworth (this last an elder contemporary of the poet, coming up in 1826 and graduating in 1830) had gained it twice, and Lytton Bulwer (after Lord Lytton) once. But, however creditable their exercises, no one had ever thought of saying of them that they had but seldom been equalled for a century. *Timbuctoo*, perhaps, is rather a *spes* than a *res*,[2] but it was an instance of remarkable critical sagacity to discern the future in the present.

Tennyson never "kept," as the local term has it, or resided, to use

[1] See page 77.

[2] "Difficile est laudare puerum," says Cicero, "non enim res sed spes est."

ordinary language, within the college walls. He lodged[1] in one of a row of houses known as Corpus Buildings, from their proximity to the college of that name. There is no reference to this place in any of the poems, but in the eighty-seventh poem of *In Memoriam* is the *locus*



Corpus Buildings, Cambridge

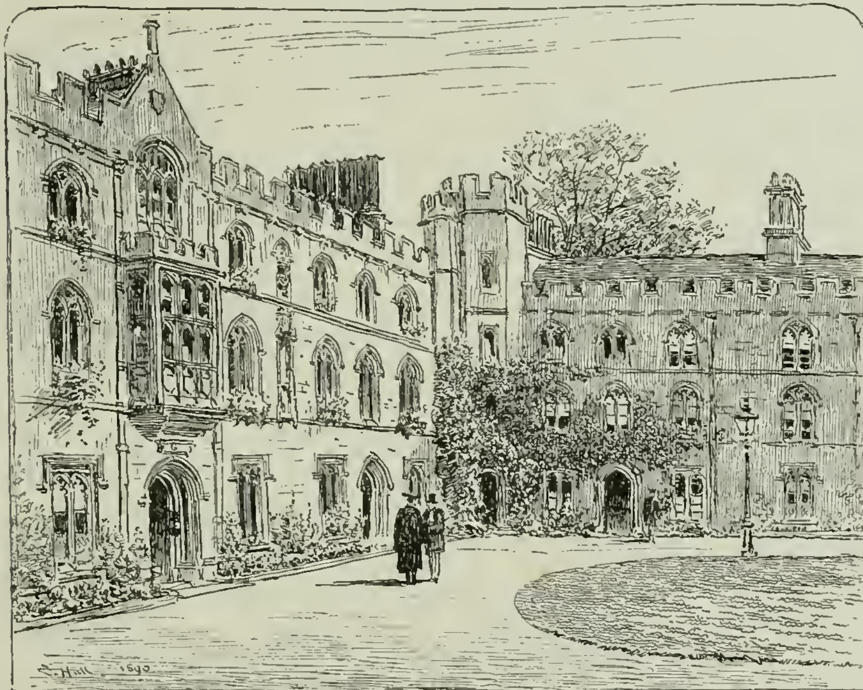
classicus which describes the visit paid by the poet to his old college, and especially to the rooms once tenanted by his friend Arthur Hallam :—

> "I past beside the reverend walls
> In which of old I wore the gown ;
> I roved at random thro' the town,
> And saw the tumult of the halls ;
>
> "And heard once more in college fanes
> The storm their high-built organs make,
> And thunder-music, rolling, shake
> The prophets blazon'd on the panes ;
>
> "And caught once more the distant shout,
> The measured pulse of racing oars
> Among the willows ; paced the shores
> And many a bridge, and all about

[1] A considerable proportion of the Trinity undergraduates have always lodged outside the college ; "always," that is, since the University recovered from the depression caused by the long war with France. Its actual *nadir* was in 1775, when the number of matriculations sank to 121 ; but in 1804 it was only 128, and during the twelve years 1794–1805 the average was 153.

> "The same gray flats again, and felt
> The same, but not the same; and last
> Up that long walk of limes I past
> To see the rooms in which he dwelt."

"The rooms in which he dwelt" are on the west side of the New Court, looking into the quadrangle on the one side, and having a prospect, on the other, of the "long walk of limes." The "New Court" was in those days



New Court of Trinity College, Cambridge

really new, for it had been opened only five years before; opened, it may be said in passing, with festivities that were ludicrously marred by a quarrel between the "dons" and the undergraduates.[1]

[1] There was to be a grand banquet in Hall, at which all the college were to be present. But it seemed good to the authorities that the undergraduates should not be permitted to stay and hear the speeches. The undergraduates resented this exclusion, somewhat perversely, one might say, as they cannot be supposed to have had any special eagerness to listen to their teachers. Doubtless they resented the supposed imputation on their good manners. Anyhow they absented themselves with one consent from the feast, and the speakers of the evening were without a "gallery."

The poet found a noisy wine party going on within the place where, as he says,

> "once we held debate, a band
> Of youthful friends, on mind and art,
> And labour, and the changing mart,
> And all the framework of the land."

This "band of youthful friends" was, in fact, a small literary and debating society, that called itself the Twelve Apostles. It was a certain distinction to be made a member of it. Henry Alford records with pride in his diary that he had been "elected an Apostle," and when he sums up the academical successes of the year he reckons this among them.

I have not been able to recover the names of the "Apostles"; but some among the poet's contemporaries may be mentioned. There was W. H. Brookfield, the "Old Brooks," whom he addresses in that pathetic sonnet of which I may quote a few lines:—

> "How oft we two have heard St. Mary's chimes,
> How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,
> Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!
> How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,
> Him, the lost sight of those dawn-golden times,
> Who loved you well!"

Francis Garden, afterwards sub-Dean of the Chapels Royal; A. W. Kinglake, the author of *Eothen*, and the historian of the Crimean War; Richard Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton; Richard Chenevix Trench, Dean of Westminster and Archbishop of Dublin; and William Hepworth Thompson, who succeeded Whewell in the Mastership of Trinity.

The "long walk of limes," shown in our picture, is one of the most picturesque features of that most picturesque region, popularly known as the "Backs,"[1] one of the special glories of Cambridge, and an effective weapon in that never-to-be-decided controversy touching the relative beauty of the two University towns. The walk is divided by one of the "many bridges" across the Cam; the others being a very ugly building known as the "Town Bridge," the Bridge of Clare College, a handsome Renaissance

[1] "The Backs," *i.e.* of the colleges, especially Trinity, St. John's, Clare, and King's.

structure, adorned with stone spheres, one of which, says a local prophecy, will fall into the river when Clare has another Senior Wrangler,[1] and King's Bridge. Beyond the bridge it extends to the Fellows' Garden, well known as the Roundabout.[2] In the distance a Church tower could formerly be seen, an

Avenue of Trinity College, Cambridge

object which gave rise to Porson's famous *bon-mot*, that the walk resembled the life of a Trinity Fellow—a long line with a church (by which, of course, he meant a college living) at the end. The church is not now visible through the trees, as indeed it may be said to have disappeared from the prospect

[1] The last was in 1760. The prophecy is obviously one of the kind that fulfils itself.

[2] The name had its origin in the configuration of the ground. The central portion did not belong to the college, and the garden itself was a circular strip of land round it. The garden now includes the whole plot.

of a Trinity Fellow. It is very seldom nowadays that a Fellow avails himself of the college patronage; indeed, very few of the number are in orders.

The walk and its surroundings are somewhat changed from what they were sixty years ago. The trees, which must have then been in their prime, begin to show the signs of decay. In another sixty years, if the ground has not been meanwhile laid out in allotments, the avenue will have given place to the successor which has been prudently provided, but which will scarcely equal it in beauty.

Though there are none of the *loca sacra* of Trinity that are connected with Tennyson himself, the college has not, of course, been forgetful of one of the greatest of its *alumni*. It has made him an Honorary Fellow; among the busts of famous men that adorn its magnificent library is one of the poet executed in 1857 by Thomas Woolner; and on one of the library shelves is as curious a token of respect as an admirer ever paid to the genius of a favourite author. This is a handsome volume, elegantly bound and adorned with some really excellent illustrations, *The Idylls of the King* (*in Shorthand*), by Arthur G. Doughty. The book comes from across the Atlantic, having been produced at the Dominion Illustrated Press in Toronto.

One more Cambridge locality remains to be briefly noticed. Among what may be called the *genre* pictures given us in Lord Tennyson's poetry, there is not one that has given more universal pleasure[1] than *The Miller's Daughter*. It was this, there seems to be some ground for

[1] We must except a crabbed *Quarterly* Reviewer. But then reviewers have made themselves conspicuously foolish when writing about Tennyson's verse. It was a critic in the *Quarterly*—though not the particular critic who fell foul of *The Miller's Daughter*—that made what is, perhaps, the most absurd blunder contained in all the records of reviewing. It will be remembered that in *The Princess* the secret of the three disguised guests is discovered by Melissa, daughter of the Lady Blanche, who overhears the talk of the Lady Psyche and her brother Florian. We are made to see her as she stood—

> "with her hand upon the lock,
> A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,
> That clad her like an April daffodilly
> (Her mother's colour)."

Of course it means that the students on the Lady Blanche's "side" wore yellow gowns. But what says the intelligent reviewer? "What a pity to break this beautiful picture *with that harsh stroke about her mother's faded hue*."

Grantchester Mill

GRANTCHESTER MILL

saying, that determined the Queen to make Tennyson the successor of Wordsworth in the Laureateship. Three mills in the neighbourhood of Somersby—Tetford, Aswardby, and Stockforth—have been named as competitors for the honour of having suggested the poem. One (Tetford) is put out of court, it is suggested, in what is surely a somewhat prosaic spirit, by the fact that the wheel has, it is probable, always been inclosed. Of the two others, Stockforth, for some reason, has been preferred, the "local touches" in the poems being, we are told, "very precise" in pointing in this direction. One would naturally have been content to regard the story as what it manifestly is—an ideal. But as the attempt to identify it has been made, it may be as well to give Lord Tennyson's own words: "If it was anywhere, it was Trumpington." By "Trumpington," of course, he meant Grantchester Mill, which is close by, and of which we have accordingly given a picture. Of course we may look in vain for the old mansion looking down upon the village spire (Grantchester Church has a tower), for the "firry woodlands," and the "white chalk quarry on the hill," having to be content with the very vague identification of "if it was anywhere." But no one will regret seeing one of the prettiest spots, approached by what is certainly the very prettiest walk in the vicinity of Cambridge, and connecting it, though by the slightest link, with a poem that is exquisitely graceful and tender.

A curious story is told that illustrates happily enough the intellectual activity of the set of which Arthur Hallam was one of the leading spirits, and, I may add, shows that in its criticism and appreciation of literary merit, it was not a little in advance of the day. It was resolved by the Cambridge Union, a literary club and debating society which was then of recent origin, to send a deputation to the sister institution at Oxford, to maintain the proposition that Shelley was a greater poet than Byron. The deputation went, and the debate was held, Henry Edward Manning, now Cardinal, then a scholar of Balliol, being one of the chief speakers on the Oxford side. But Oxford did not shine in the discussion. Its orators seem scarcely to have been aware of Shelley's existence. Indeed,

it became apparent, as was said by one who took part in the contest, that the Oxford speakers were for some time under the impression that the poet whom Cambridge sought to exalt above Byron was Shenstone. Hence, he remarked, and we can easily imagine it, they did not appear to advantage. Among the deputation from Cambridge were Arthur Hallam, whose literary enthusiasm is said to have greatly impressed his hearers, and one Sunderland, whose brilliant oratory was long remembered by those who knew him. Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, who told the story to a friend of mine, was another member of the Cambridge deputation. In a speech which he delivered some years back at the Wordsworth dinner, he said that he had sometimes asked himself how he could possibly have obtained the necessary permission from the Vice-Chancellor, "that somewhat narrow-minded theologian," Dr. Wordsworth, Master of Trinity. It was certain that if Dr. Wordsworth knew anything of Shelley, that knowledge would not dispose him in his favour. How then had he given leave to a mission which had for its purpose to celebrate his praise? All that Lord Houghton could say was that it was possible that he had *by mistake* represented the object of the deputation as being to defend the thesis that *Wordsworth* was a greater poet than Byron. Lord Houghton added that probably this was not the case, but my readers may be of opinion that it probably was.

It may be convenient to give at this place a brief chronological account of the poet's earlier publications. Of *Poems by Two Brothers* (1827) and *Timbuctoo* (1829) I have already spoken.

In 1830, the second year of Tennyson's residence at Cambridge, he published a volume bearing the title of *Poems chiefly Lyrical*. It is interesting to note that it contains the following out of what may be called the acknowledged poems:—

"Claribel," "Lilian," "Isabel," "Mariana," "To ——" (beginning "Clear-headed friend, whose joyful scorn"—the "clear-headed friend," it may be said, was J. W. Blakesley, afterwards Dean of Lincoln; but the poem does not wholly apply to him), "Song—The Owl," "Second Song—To the Same," "Recollections of the Arabian Nights," "Ode to

Memory" (a very early poem), "Song," "A Character," "The Poet," "The Poet's Mind," "The Deserted House," "The Dying Swan," "A Dirge," "Love and Death," "The Ballad of Oriana,' "Circumstance," "The Sleeping Beauty," "The Sea-Fairies."

Twenty-seven poems contained in this volume have been suppressed. On the other hand, the division of *Juvenilia* contains various additions, especially under the head of "Early Sonnets." The volume was reviewed in an appreciative way by John Stuart Mill in the *Westminster Review*, January, 1831. Leigh Hunt also reviewed it, together with a volume published by Charles Tennyson in the same year in four successive numbers of the *Tatler*. Finally, Professor Wilson (Christopher North) wrote a long notice of it in *Blackwood's Magazine*, May, 1832.

In 1833 appeared *Poems*, by Alfred Tennyson (Moxon). This volume contained: "The Lady of Shalott," "Mariana in the South," "Eleänore," "The Miller's Daughter," "Œnone," "The Two Sisters," "To ——" "The May Queen" and "New Year's Eve," "The Lotos Eaters," "A Dream of Fair Women," "Margaret," "The Death of the Old Year," "To J. S." (James Spedding), and twelve other poems, afterwards suppressed.

This volume was contemptuously reviewed in the *Quarterly*. Coleridge is reported to have made about it a remark which reads very strangely in view of what is now universally acknowledged—the poet's excellence as a metrist—that Mr. Tennyson had begun to write verse without very well understanding what metre was. The fact was that he had had much practice in writing in the accepted metres, and that his father had even advised him not to be so regular in his rhythms.

In 1833 *The Lover's Tale*, written five years before, was printed, and immediately recalled.

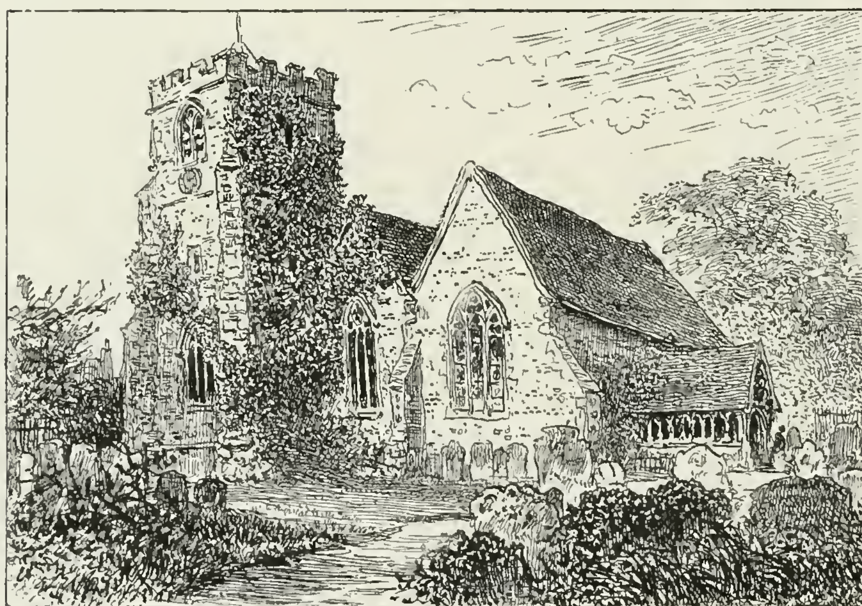
After 1833 came nine years of silence, broken only by one or two single poems. In 1842 a volume selected from the poems of 1830 and 1832, together with another volume of pieces entirely new, appeared. This was reviewed in a highly appreciative way by John Sterling in the *Quarterly*.

In 1847 *The Princess* was published, and in 1850 *In Memoriam*.

XIII

SHIPLAKE

The marriage of Alfred Tennyson and Emily Sellwood was solemnized at Shiplake Church on June 13th, 1850. Shiplake is a river-side parish, on the Oxfordshire bank of the Thames, between two and three miles west of Henley-on-Thames. The church and vicarage stand upon a some-

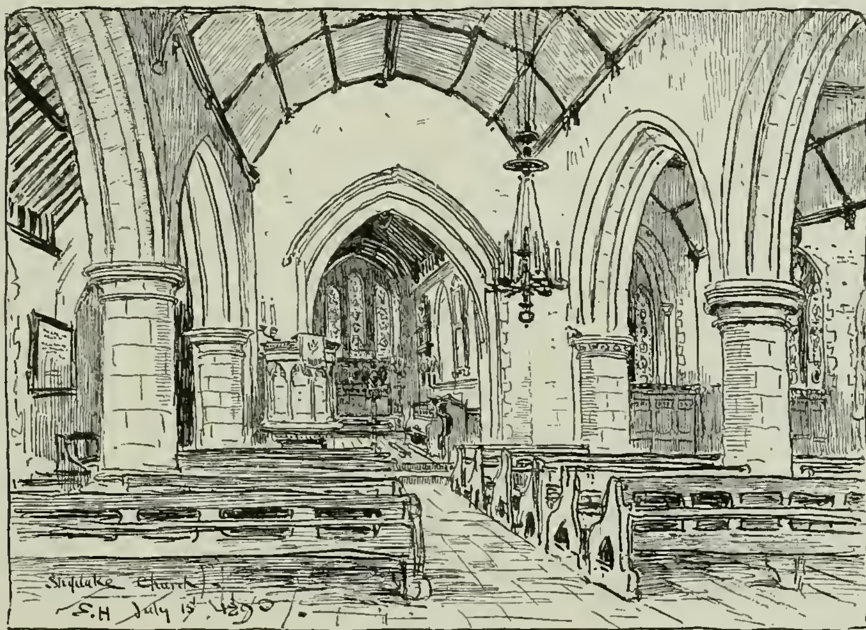


Shiplake Church

what bold eminence overlooking the valley of the Thames in the direction of Sonning and Reading. The view, of which some glimpses can be obtained through the trees which almost encircle the churchyard, but which can be seen in perfection from the vicarage garden, is not wholly unlike the prospect of the Thames from Richmond Hill. But it is far less varied, and, indeed, less beautiful. The river, too, does not display

itself to advantage. Its volume has been already diminished by that curious effluent, as it may be called, St. Patrick's river,[1] and the stream is divided by an island of considerable extent.

The church is a handsome structure in various styles of architecture, from Early English downwards. The oldest portion is to be seen in the tower and in the north aisle. These indeed constituted the original church, which was a chapel served from the monastery of Great Missenden in



Shiplake Church

the county of Bucks. The tower is built of flint, with large roughly-dressed blocks of chalk, after a fashion not uncommon in South Oxfordshire, and was used, in the days when the church was dependent on Great Missenden, as a lodging for the monk who served it. After the dissolution of the monasteries the rights of the Abbey came into the hands of the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, who are still impropriators of the great tithes and patrons.

[1] St. Patrick's river flows out of the Thames, and joins the Loddon, after a wandering course of two or three miles. The Loddon flows into the Thames below Shiplake lock, and thus restores to the main river its contribution.

The church was restored twenty years ago by Mr. Street. Mr. Street was an architect whose skill and taste it would be most ungracious to depreciate. Still I may say without offence that, in 1870, what may be called the historic sense in church restoration had not been fully developed, and that much was swept away in obedience to rigid laws of architectural propriety which would now, it is probable, be retained. The main features of the structure remain the same, but, in detail, the views which we give of the exterior of the church do not, it must be confessed, very closely resemble the building in which Alfred Tennyson and Emily Sarah Sellwood were married forty years ago. The ceremony was performed by the vicar of the time, a Lincolnshire friend, the Rev. D. Rawnsley, and the attesting witnesses are four, signing in the following order :—

> "Cecilia Lushington,
> Edmund Law Lushington,
> Catharine Ann Rawnsley,
> Henry Sellwood."

It may be mentioned that the bridegroom's signature is very plainly written, and is not unlike the calligraphy of his father, as exhibited in the register of Somersby and Bag Enderby.

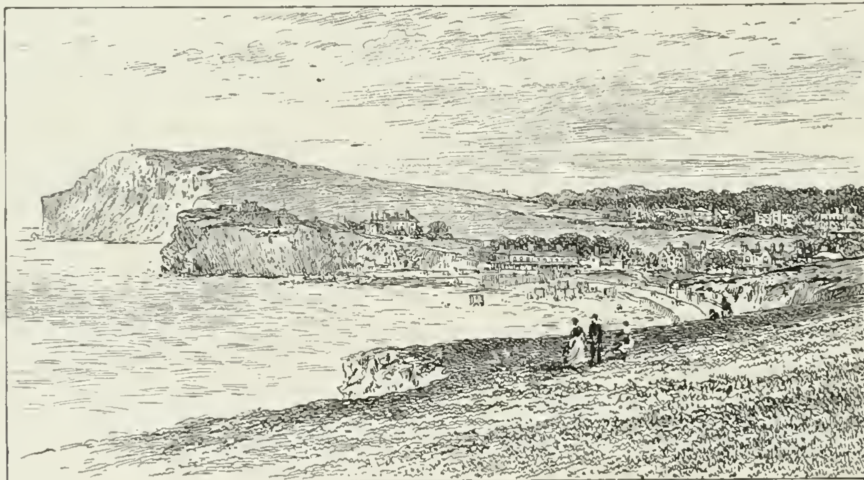
The bride was married from the vicarage house. The vicar was the bride's cousin by marriage. The house, though succeeding incumbents have added to it, is less changed than the church. A room in it is shown as that which the poet was accustomed to occupy on his frequent visits to Shiplake.

XIV

FRESHWATER

Freshwater, to use the name without qualification, is an extensive parish occupying the south-western corner of the Isle of Wight. It is divided into the five hamlets of Easton, Weston, Norton, Totland Bay, and School Green, extends over more than five thousand acres, and contains between two and three thousand inhabitants. Freshwater Gate is, properly speaking, a natural cave in the cliff, but the name is sometimes used of the opening in the line of downs that form the south-western coast of the island, an opening that may be otherwise described as Freshwater Bay. The "fresh water" from which it gets its name, probably given by seafarers eastward bound who found here their first opportunity of replenishing their empty barrels, is to be found not many yards from the beach, in the springs of the Yar, a little stream which soon opens out into a wide estuary, and so flows into the channel of the Solent at the ancient little town of Yarmouth. The Gate or Bay is a picturesque little stretch of beach, not more than a few hundred yards in length. At its eastern point are some curious detached masses of chalk cliff which stand out in the sea, some five hundred yards from the shore at high water, one of them hollowed by the action of the water into the shape of an arch. Beyond these, as the traveller pursues his way eastward, the down continues to ascend, though not without interruption, till it reaches in St. Catherine's Hill, the highest point of the island, an altitude of more than eight hundred feet above the sea-level. Westward of the Bay there is a somewhat steep ascent, which leads to one of the many forts which guard the approaches to the Channel. Beyond

the fort the traveller comes on a fine stretch of open down, now called Tennyson's Down. Its seaward boundary is a range of lofty cliffs, sometimes showing a sheer fall into the water, sometimes sufficiently inclined to allow of a somewhat perilous descent into one of the little shingly bays which have been hollowed out by the waves. At the western extremity of the island they have been broken by the storms of centuries into those strangely shaped rocks which are known as the Needles, a name associated with many a tragic story of shipwreck. Above the Needles is the lighthouse, standing on the highest point of the downs, and not less than six hundred feet above the sea. The Needles past, our faces being now turned from northward to eastward, we come first to Alum Bay, with its sand cliffs so picturesquely diversified in colour, then to Totland Bay, and so to the cliffs' end, when nearly opposite the formidable bastions of Hurst Castle on the mainland.



Freshwater

XV

FARRINGFORD

The domain of Farringford can be seen on the traveller's right hand, as he makes his way westward from Freshwater Bay, lying at the foot of the inland slope of the down. The house itself is not visible from any point of this route, but a glimpse of the roof may be caught from the ascent on the eastern side of the Bay. The estate extends to between four and five hundred acres, part of them downland, and contains what is known as King's Manor. The royal ownership indicated by this name is recorded by Domesday Book where we find the following entry :—" Ye King holds Frescewatre, in demesne. It was held by Tosti [Earl Tostig, brother of King Harold—this, of course, refers to the "time of King Edward," a standard of comparison used throughout the Survey], and was then assessed at 15 hides. It is now assessed at 6 hides. There are fifteen ploughlands, two ploughlands are in demesne, and 18 villagers and 10 borderers employ 8 ploughs. There are seven servants and six acres of meadow. It was worth in King Edward's time sixteen pounds, and afterwards twenty pounds ; but it is let at thirty pounds."

At this time, therefore, all Freshwater was what we should call Crown land. But it would appear that part of it was afterwards bestowed on some ecclesiastical body. This body seems to have been the Abbey of Quarr or Quarrera (so called from the stone quarries in the neighbourhood). Quarr was near the town of Ryde, and was one of the first Cistercian monasteries established in England. Its first foundation was due to Baldwin, Earl of Devon, who endowed it in the thirty-second year of Henry I.

Subsequent benefactors added to its revenues, and at the dissolution its income was estimated at a *net* sum of £134 3*s.* 11*d.* Some of the local names recall this ecclesiastical ownership. Among them are: "Maidens' Croft," ("Virgin Mary's Field,") "Abraham's Mead," and "The Clerks' Hill." Lord Tennyson has in his possession transference deeds signed by Walter de Fferingford, evidently the chief owner of land at Freshwater.

Farringford

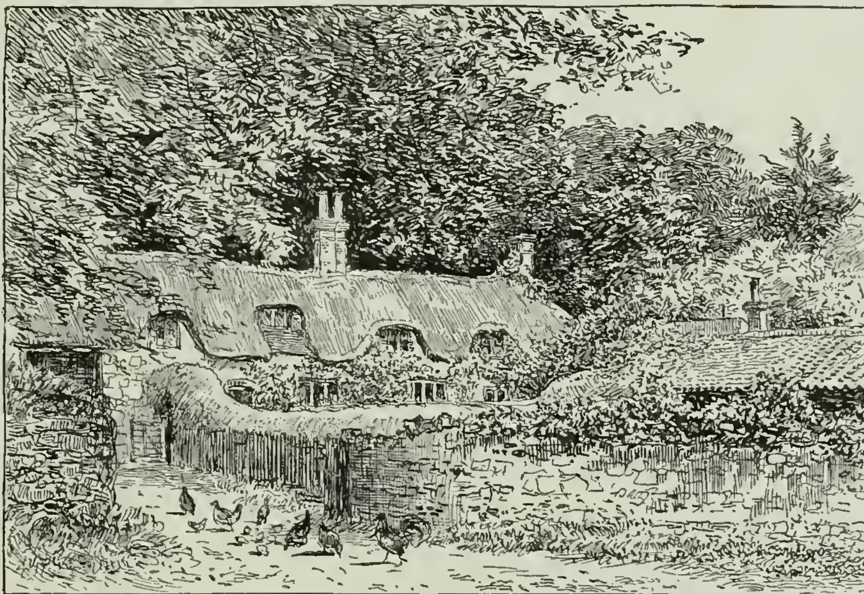
The domain of Farringford was purchased by Mr. Tennyson in 1852, its former possessor having been Mr. Seymour, father of the late Lady Coleridge. The house, while not possessing any architectural pretensions, has something singularly attractive about it. Not the least of its charms are the creeping plants which clothe it from roof-tree to foundation with a mantle of green. A delightful garden, laid out by the poet and his wife, surrounds it, and beyond this again is a small well-wooded park.

Farringford

FARRINGFORD

Both park and house are sheltered from the south-westerly gales by a ridge of down. Westward of the house is a walled garden, and beyond this again the home or dairy farm, of which we have given a picture.

The first *locus classicus* in the poems relating to Farringford is, of course, the well-known "Invitation" to the Rev. F. D. Maurice. Mr. Maurice, it should be explained, had just been expelled from his professorships, one of history, and another of theology, by the Council of King's College,



The Dairy Farm, Farringford

London. He had published a book entitled *Theological Essays.* Not a few of the views which were there advanced are now become, it may be said, commonplaces of theology; but at that time they seemed very dangerous to many worthy people. Alarm was especially excited by the way in which the essayist dealt with the subject of everlasting punishment. While not dogmatizing upon it in the fashion of the Universalists,[1] he pointed out that the word (*aionios*), translated by "eternal," is not equivalent to "everlasting," but relates rather to the nature and quality than the duration of that, be it life or death, which it qualifies. Of course the general tendency

The Universalists maintain as an article of faith that salvation is universal.

of this teaching was in the direction of that "larger hope" to which Tennyson himself had given utterance, when in *In Memoriam*, liv., he wrote—

"O yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood:

"That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete."

The friendship between Tennyson and Maurice was of considerable standing, and it had been drawn closer by the fact that Maurice had stood godfather to the poet's son, Hallam, born in 1852 at Twickenham. In January, 1854, a time, it will be remembered, when the breaking out of war between Russia and England was imminent, Tennyson addressed a poetical epistle to his friend, inviting him to pay a visit at Farringford. "Come," it said,

"Come, when no graver cares employ,
Godfather, come and see your boy;
Your presence will be sun in winter
Making the little one leap for joy."

He is to come to a place,

"Where far from noise and smoke of town
I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order'd garden,
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

"You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine.

"For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand,
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand."

These last lines have a pathetic association with a poem written

Freshwater Down from the Grounds of Farringford.

FRESHWATER DOWN

FROM THE GROUNDS OF FARRINGFORD

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twenty-five years afterwards, to which reference has already been made. In the "joyless June" that followed the death of his brother Charles the poet hears this billow breaking, and its hoarse roar seems to be in melancholy harmony with his grief.

In the last volume, again, that we have had from the same pen (*Demeter, and Other Poems*, 1889) we hear of the woods and the garden of Farringford. It is peculiarly interesting to compare the language of *Ulysses* with that of the Invitation to F. D. Maurice. More than thirty years have past. For now, says the poet

> "The century's three strong eights have met
> To drag me down to seventy-nine
> In summer, if I reach my day."

Meanwhile he has learnt to love the place with a more particularizing love.

> "to trace
> On paler heavens the branching grace
> Of leafless elm, or naked lime;
>
> "And see my cedar green, and there
> My giant ilex keeping leaf
> When frosts are keen and days are brief,
> Or marvel how, in English air,
>
> "My yucca, which no winter quells,
> Altho' the months have scarce begun,
> Has pushed towards our faintest sun
> A spike of half-accomplished bells.
>
> "Or watch the braving pine which here
> The warrior of Caprera set,
> A name that earth will not forget,
> Till earth has rolled her latest year."

The references here are distinct and direct, but we may find other allusions, especially in *Maud*, which shows, perhaps, more of the local colour of this house by the sea than any other of the poems. Here the hero at one time walks by himself in his "own dark garden ground"—

> "Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung shipwrecking roar,
> Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragged down by the sea;"

and at another watches when

> "the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,
> Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,
> The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land;"

and again hears

> "the voice of the long sea wave as it swelled
> Now and then in the dun-gray dawn."

The sea, whether seen or heard, dashing under stormy skies against the towering cliffs of Farringford Beacon, or shining blue in the sunshine at the end of some vista of trees, is the most characteristic feature of this home of the poet.

There is one more thing to be mentioned before we leave the poet's Isle of Wight home. The poet's younger son Lionel was born here; the tablet which commemorates him—he died on his way home from India—is to be seen in Freshwater Church. It bears the following inscription, written by his brother, Hallam Tennyson, doubtless under the supervision of his father :—

IN MEMORIAM
LIONEL TENNYSON,
FILII, MARITI, PATRIS CARISSIMI
FORMA, MENTE, MORUM SIMPLICITATE
LAUDEM INTER AEQUALES MATURE ADEPTI,
FAMAM QUOQUE IN REPUBLICA, SI VITA SUFFECISSET,
SINE DUBIO ADEPTURI.
OBDORMIVIT IN CHRISTO
DIE APR. XX. ANNO CHRISTI MDCCCLXXXVI. ÆTAT. XXXII.
ET IN MARI APUD PERIN INDORUM
SEPULTUS EST.

The father's own tribute to his son is to be found in the dedicatory poem of his latest volume (*Demeter*) :—

> "A soul that watched from earliest youth,
> And on thro' many a lightening year,
> Had never swerved from craft or fear
> By one side-path from simple truth:
>
> "Who might have chased and claspt Renown,
> And caught her chaplet here—and there
> In haunts of jungle-poisoned air
> The flame of life went flickering down."

A beautiful statue of St. John, from the chisel of Miss Mary Grant, has been erected by Lord and Lady Tennyson near the Communion Table of the Church in memory of their son.

St Cathe[illegible]s Head from the Grounds of Farringford.

ST. CATHERINE'S HEAD

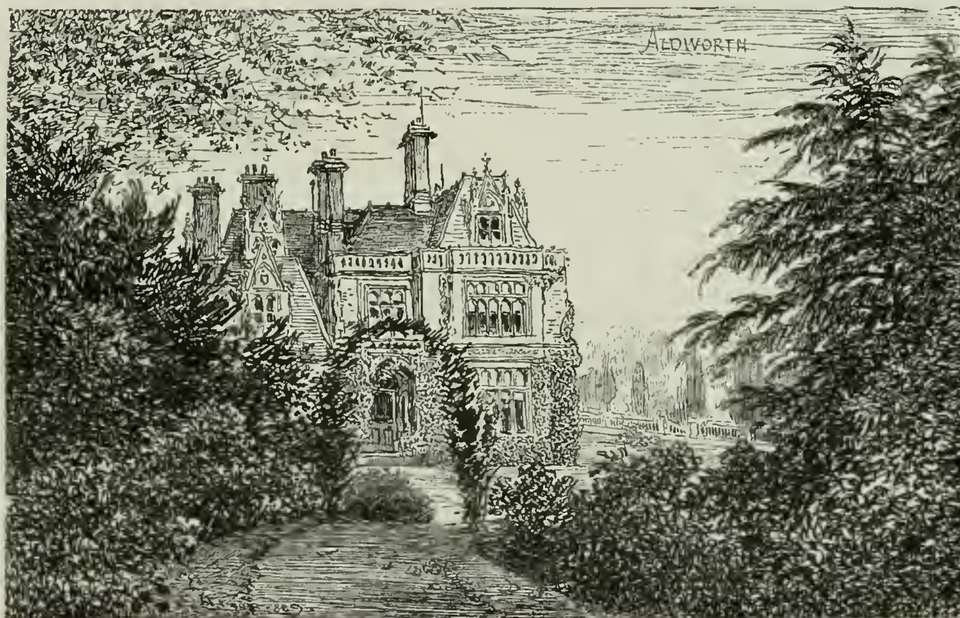
FROM THE GROUNDS OF FARRINGFORD

P

XVI

ALDWORTH

In 1872, Mr. Tennyson purchased a small estate on the top of Black Down, a moorland height that rises to the height of some hundred feet, south of the town of Haslemere, and near to the borders of the three



Aldworth

counties of Hampshire, Surrey, and Sussex. A more bracing air than could be found at Freshwater during the heats of summer, and a retirement which it was difficult to secure at what was becoming a popular seaside resort, were among the attractions of the new spot. The house, which goes by the

name of Aldworth, called after one of the old Sellwood demesnes, stands on the southern slope of the Down, a magnificent expanse of open country, covered with heather, bracken, and whortleberry. It was built from the designs, under the superintendence of Lord Tennyson, of Mr. J. T. Knowles, known to most people as the founder and editor of the *Nineteenth Century*, but also an architect in large practice, some of whose work may be seen in Victoria Street, London, and in the western extensions of Brighton.

The prospect from the terrace of the house, reaching, it will be under stood, in the opposite direction to that taken in our picture, is one of the finest to be found in the south of England. The scene is touched in the verses addressed to General Hamley—

> " Our beeches yellowing, and from each
>   The light leaf falling fast,
> While squirrels from our fiery beech
>   Were carrying off the mast,
> You came and looked, and lov'd the view
>   Long known and loved by me;
> Green Sussex fading into blue,
>   With one gray glimpse of sea."

It is indeed the whole of "green Sussex" that lies before one as one looks from where the Fairlight Downs dip into the Pitt Level on the left to Chichester on the right. And indeed more than Sussex is visible: on one side no small part of Kent can be seen; and if one half turns, the noble eminence of Leith Hill, and on the other Portsmouth and the Hampshire Downs. The "one gray glimpse of sea" is where there is an opening in the South Downs at Arundel.

I may now complete the list of Lord Tennyson's works. That which will be found on pp. 88-9, gave the poems connected with Lincolnshire, with Cambridge, and with the period that followed his departure from his birthplace—a period which our illustrations touch only at the point of

Aldworth · Blackdown

ALDWORTH, BLACKDOWN

Shiplake. Those that follow belong to the homes of his later life—Farringford and Aldworth.

Maud	1855	*The Lover's Tale*	1879
Idylls of the King	1859	*Ballads and other Poems* ...	1880
Enoch Arden	1864	*The Cup and the Falcon* ..	1884
The Holy Grail	1870	*Becket*	1884
Gareth and Lynette	1872	*Tiresias and other Poems* ...	1885
Queen Mary	1875	*Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*	1886
Harold	1877	*Demeter and other Poems* ...	1889

I have now finished my task, which, indeed, has been in a singular degree a labour of love. Never has the humble function of writing the letterpress for a series of illustrations been more keenly felt to be both delightful and honourable. I owe to the poems of Lord Tennyson more than I can estimate in my intellectual and spiritual life. It would be arrogant to claim for these pages the character of what the Greeks used to call *threpteria*, the return for nurture that children make to their parents. I cannot suppose that they will have any value for the poet. Yet I would fain hope that, in helping others to understand some of the circumstances under which his genius has grown and borne fruit, I have been able to show a gratitude that is not altogether idle.

It only remains for me to thank the friends that have helped me. I may name the Rev. J. Soper, Rector of Somersby, the Rev. J. F. Quirk, Vicar of Grasby, and the Rev. S. Lewin, Vicar of Tealby. My warmest acknowledgments are due to Lord Tennyson, and to Messrs. Macmillan and Co., for the liberality with which they have permitted me to quote.

THE END.

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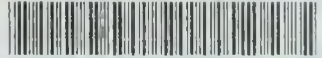
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